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IN ONE VOLUME.

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By the same Author,

MRS. MAINWARING'S JOURNAL	1 vol.
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DAYSPRING:

A STORY OF THE TIME OF WILLIAM TYNDALE,

REFORMER, SCHOLAR, AND MARTYR.

BY

EMMA MARSHALL,

AUTHOR OF "MRS. MAINWARING'S JOURNAL," "LADY ALICE," ETC.

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LEIPZIG

BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1883.

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"Time Trieth."

"Thy Word is tried to the uttermost,
Therefore Thy servant loveth it."

"The entrance of Thy Word giveth LIGHT."



TO
THE RIGHT REVEREND
CHARLES JOHN,
LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

MY DEAR LORD,

The work of the first Translation of the New Testament into the English language, and the work of the last Revision of the text, pursued with untiring zeal and devotion, have both alike associations with the hills and valleys of Gloucestershire.

Your Lordship's name is thus indissolubly linked with that of your great predecessor, in the consecration of the highest gifts of scholarship to the service of God, wherever the English language is spoken.

With your kind permission I dedicate to you, this story of the noble life of William Tyndale, and beg you to accept it, as a very small token of my respectful and affectionate regard.

I am, my dear Lord,

Yours most truly,

EMMA MARSHALL.

FERNCLIFFE,
LEIGH WOODS, CLIFTON,
December, 1882.

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DAYSPRING:

A STORY OF THE TIME OF WILLIAM TYNDALE,

REFORMER, SCHOLAR, AND MARTYR.

INTRODUCTORY.

AN attempt has been made in this story to throw the light of "the Dayspring" upon one of the most striking figures of that time of awakening, in the early part of the sixteenth century. But our knowledge of the details of William Tyndale's life in Gloucestershire is but comparatively scanty. He has left his work behind him to stand as a memorial throughout all generations of English men and English women; but of himself we know little beyond his distinct personality as Reformer, Scholar, and Martyr. These salient points are indeed no ordinary ones, and the grand outline of the picture may be filled in with the colouring of the sincerity, benevolence, and singleness of aim, which appear to me, his main characteristics. To give the Bread of life to the hungry, to bring the thirsty soul to the fountain of living water, to unlock the prison-house made fast by the bars and bolts of ignorance and superstition—this was William Tyndale's steadfast purpose, this his lifelong desire.

And when death came, it found the purpose fulfilled, the longing satisfied. Doubtless for him the crown of

martyrdom was set with brightest jewels. He had not laboured in vain, and he knew, as it has been given to few men to know, that his work would follow him.

The great difficulties which beset the writer of an historical story are abundant here. No attempt has been made to deal with real people and real names, except those which are familiar as household words.

Sir John Walsh's children are imaginary characters, with many others; and John Huchyns and his sister Katherine, though mentioned in the Chronicles of the Huchyns-Tyndale family, play only the part of all fictitious characters in the incidents attributed to them, and in their association with Katherina Mountjoy; herself, I need not say, having no historical existence whatever.

It is wholly impossible to overrate what we owe William Tyndale. As his stately figure moves before us over the Gloucestershire hills, and as he girds on his armour for the conflict, and drinks deep of the precious draught of Greek scholarship, that he may pour its new wine into the stream by the wayside which shall refresh thousands and tens of thousands of his countrymen in the years to come, our eyes linger on him with love and reverence and gratitude hard to put into words.

Again, when driven from his quiet asylum at Sodbury Manor, tossed about on the surging sea of human life in the great metropolis, disappointed and deceived, he is yet the same calm and dignified man. In the little we read of his London life, there is nothing of railing or contention. He must do his work, and as to the rest, God would take care of it.

And then in the long years he spent as an exile, we read of his benevolence, "of his deeds of love and kindness as he stood by the beds of the sick and dying." His beloved Book was printed, and brought down

showers of bitter persecution. It was seized, burned at St. Paul's Cross, and the ashes scattered to the four winds of heaven. But the giant resolve did not falter. The more Bibles that were burned, the more would he print and send to England! Shamefully betrayed at last by a seeming friend, he contented himself to die.

"Open the king's eyes that he may see," he said; and so with a prayer for those who did him wrong, like his Divine Master, he passed to the eternal rest of His redeemed ones, leaving behind him the imperishable work which I have tried to commemorate in this story.

CHAPTER I.

DAWN.

It was the hush before the dawn. The country side lay yet in profound repose. Not a breath stirred the branches of the sombre cypress trees which stood like sentinels on either side of the old parish church of Little Sodbury. Not a sound broke the stillness, except the faint murmur of a brook, which came rippling down from the Cotswold Hills from its deep spring of crystal purity.

Venus, the morning star, shone with brilliant clearness in the eastern sky, where the light was now strengthening, and told that the sun was near to bless the earth with warmth and brightness. Gradually, but surely, the pale ethereal opal took a deeper colour, a faint primrose hue changed to daffodil, and rosy lines streaked the eastern heaven. Then the birds awoke to sing their matins, the cattle in the rich meadows rose like giants refreshed to taste the dewy grass, the rooks gave the signal to begin their day's work, and the poultry in Dame Walsh's yard clucked and cackled, while the cock sent forth his clarion to proclaim that the day was born!

Just as the first level rays had thrown the shadow of the budding elms upon the park which surrounded the Manor House, the residence of a worthy knight, Sir John Walsh, a girl's figure crossed the green sward, with a large open basket on her head.

No English maiden ever walked with the grace of this girl, nor bore a weight on her head with such ease and freedom.

Karina's dark hair was bound back with a deep crimson snood. Her jacket, made with long hanging sleeves, displayed arms which a sculptor might be glad to take for his model. Her short skirt showed feet and ankles which matched the arms in symmetry, and she stepped out with the stately tread of a princess, and the swiftness of a young deer.

Karina sang as she went, a low, sweet song, very much like the brook, musical and clear. With one hand she occasionally gave the basket a touch to steady it, placing the other at her side, her elbow forming a graceful curve.

As she left the park, the bell of the little church gave a short chime, and setting down her basket by the stone wall of the churchyard, Karina passed under the old Norman porch into the church. A priest knelt at the altar, for it was the early celebration of the Mass.

Karina knelt on the rough uneven floor, and at her side were two or three labourers, and an old crone who muttered her prayers and counted her beads with her lean brown fingers.

There were no other worshippers. Sir John Walsh's household attended matins at a later hour, with due regularity; but except on festivals the Mass was said to a very small congregation.

Karina's manner was quiet and reverent, and her dark

eyes were raised with wistful entreaty to the pure blue sky, which was seen through an open clerestory window.

Long after the few worshippers had departed, and the tinkling bell, which sounded at intervals in the ceremony, was quiet, the priest knelt on, and Karina, too, knelt in her place; and not till he had gone into the vestry did the girl pursue her way. Her mission was to gather rushes, and golden daffodils, which were making the fields aglow with beauty in this early April morning.

Karina's was a self-imposed task. There were servants enough and to spare in Sir John's household, but this English spring was a delight to the girl, and the flowers sparkling with the dew were fairer to her than the diamonds and precious stones which Queen Katherine had numbered in her bridal trousseau when she came to be the bride of the boy Prince Arthur, who, dying, left her a widow before many months had passed.

Karina cut the rushes with a sharp knife she wore at her girdle, laying them at the bottom of the basket. They grew by the brook side, and with the tall slender leaves of the yellow iris, not yet in flower, made a carpet for the room in the Manor House, where the younger members of Sir John Walsh's family studied, under the guidance of the tutor and chaplain, William Tyndale.

Karina piled her basket with the golden daffodils, and then, replacing it on her head, turned homewards.

"Ah, there's Father Tyndale!" Karina exclaimed, as at a little wooden foot-bridge she met the priest, who was walking lost in meditation, a book in his hand. "Ah, we two cannot pass on this narrow plank! Who shall give in? prythee speak, and do not push me over into the brook."

As if waking from a dream, the priest came to a sudden stop, midway on the plank.

A bright smile broke over his face at the vision before him, as Karina touched her basket, and said laughing, "See, these all are to make our sanctum sanctorum gaudy to-day. Oh! these daffodils are verily bits of sunshine come down to earth! Back, back, padrone, or there will be flowers, priest, and giddy maiden in the running water."

William Tyndale obeyed her, and stepped back to *terra firma*, saying,—

"The light of the morning is on thy face, Karina. Would to God the light of His Spirit were in thy soul."

"Why so melancholy to-day, dear padre? I am trying to be staid and wise, and I do love to hear thee discourse. See now,"—lifting the basket from her head and leaning against the wooden posts which stood at the end of the plank,—“see now, tell me why thou hast a face so little like the spring time? Is it because I made merry at the lesson yesterday, and set that heavy lad Giles a-laughing? I will be as grave as my Lord High Chancellor to-day, an it will please you.”

"Karina, I am troubled in mind, whether to depart even this very day, and seek God's will in another place. It is not thy jesting, silly child; truly thou hast brightened my days here with the ripple of thy laugh, and the sunshine of thy smile. But I give displeasure to them whose bread I eat, and as I cannot change one tittle of my opinion, I must needs depart."

Karina's smiles all vanished now, and she said in a distressed voice,—

"Depart! whither? Depart, and leave us all to the old weary ways—no life, no soul! Nay, padrone, it must not be."

"Yester eve I was bidden with Sir John and his ladye to a sumptuous feast at Sir Amyas Hallowell's. There

were several learned dignitaries present, beyond me in age, and wealthy withal. Quoth one, that there was a deal of pestilent heresy abroad, insomuch that the person of the King and the Holy Father were in jeopardy. 'Aye, and,' quoth another, 'there be fellows who would bring the sacred Book down to the level of the vulgar herd—casting the pearl before the swine, to be trodden in the mire.' 'If ever that came to pass,' quoth a third, 'we will see all rule and all law set aside. But we have a remedy: it is not so long since Wycliffe found there were those who could purge the nest of unclean birds by fire.' This one turned to me, and said,—

"'What sayest thou, brother Tyndale?' Doubtless it was to entangle me in my talk, and draw me into the net, but I made answer:

"'You have got the tale by the wrong end, masters, or the sow by the wrong ear. I have studied that sacred word in the tongue in which it was writ, and I tell you it is the Book for the wayfaring man and the fool, as well as the treasure-house of gems and precious stones for the great and the rich and the learned. Ye say, my masters,' quoth I, 'that it would upset law and rule if the people get it in their own tongue; but I tell you, I read there that it teaches reverence to betters, dutiful loyalty to the King, and honour to those to whom honour is due. It teaches that the Church is the shelter of the weak and the poor.'

"More I craved to say, but I saw Dame Marjory looking askance at me, and I heard Sir John mutter 'tut, tut,' while a cold silence fell over the company. On the road home Dame Marjory began, sharp and short—her tongue verily can pierce."

"Aye, indeed; can it not?" said Karina, with a sigh; "aye, and it runs on, driving the point into one's very heart."

"I fear me," William Tyndale said, "I forgot my duty and my station, as she rated me for indiscreet words, and called me no wiser than a jester and no better than a fool—so to imperil not only myself, but the family I served, and asked why they should believe a scatter-brain like me before them; for I called out, so as the serving men who conveyed us down the park could hear,—

"‘If God spare my life, I will, ere many years pass, cause the boy who driveth the plough, or holds one of the torches, to know more of the Holy Scriptures than you do.’

"‘Peace, peace, Tyndale,’ broke in Sir John; ‘keep your rank heresy to yourself, and have a care.’

"I was silent after this; but I feel that my time is coming, and I must depart."

"Nay, nay; have you not told me that you had shelter and leisure here for study, and the very work which God has called you to do? Do not leave us. I am making some way in my studies, and as to Cicely and Giles, they are learning quicker now. How can you leave us lonesome, and cut short our pleasant hours of study of the tongue from which you are learning yourself so much of the sacred Word?"

"Karina," said William Tyndale, gently, "mistake me not. I have work to do for God, and no thoughts of pleasantness must intervene. Pleasantness! when I see that the nation is groaning in bondage, groping in darkness, and when I know that liberty and light shall pour in as a flood when the Holy Scriptures are in the hands of the poorest as well as the richest. But let us hasten, or the tongue aforesaid will be pricking thee if thou art late for the breakfast. It is seven of the clock by now."

Karina lifted the basket on her head again, and walked slowly by the tutor's side.

His wide majestic brow was encircled by the tightly fitting skull-cap, which gave a certain stiffness and rigidity to the somewhat large features below it. But in his eyes was a light which was as if the soul shone through them, and when he smiled on his pupils that rare sweet smile, even lumpish Giles and hare-brained Harry, Sir John's two sons, would feel encouraged and quickened to further effort. He had a sense of humour too, and many were the sly hits at weakness and folly, which would bring peals of merry laughter from his pupils, even though they suffered from them.

Simple in his habits, and pure in life and word, the tutor had a subtle influence in the family and household, which was felt by none more than by the dark-eyed maiden, who, separating from him at a small door at the side of the many-gabled house, went sadly to the decorations of the study.

What if he should leave them! What if harm should befall him, and the purging of the nest by fire of which his adversaries spoke be no fiction! Karina knew well the story of Lord Cobham, and of the Lollards' sufferings. The horrors of the secret tribunal, too, were not unfamiliar to her; and though comparatively safe in the shelter of the Cotswold Hills, Karina knew well that a surging sea of hatred and emulation, wrath and strife, lay beyond, and her heart misgave her.

Karina, or Katherina Mountjoy, was the orphan child of a distant relation of Sir John Walsh, who had married one of the ladies who had accompanied Katherine of Arragon when she came as Prince Arthur's bride to England, little dreaming of the sorrow and the grief of heart which were in store for her.

Her Spanish maid was a native of Cuença, and related to the family of the Valdès, the twin sons of Hernando

de Valdès were her cousins, and even in youth Karina's mother had drunk in something of the spirit which lay in the hearts of these two noble boys, and has made their names famous.

The marriage of the Spanish maiden was not a happy one; like her mistress, she had to suffer many heart pangs, though they were less prolonged. She died when Karina, or Katherina, was a child of twelve, and her father had ended a career of licentiousness and sin a year before. Queen Katherine kept the child near her for a year or two; and then, doubting perhaps her power to shield her, in her exceeding beauty, from danger, she accepted the offer of the worthy knight, Sir John Walsh, to adopt the orphan child of his kinsman. Thus it was that we find Katherina at Little Sodbury in the spring of 1523, treated as a daughter of the house, and greatly beloved by the old knight, tolerated by his good lady with the sharp tongue, and in the household generally looked on as the light and brightness of the Manor.

As Karina was busy with her rushes and daffodils, a heavy tread was heard, and the door opened to admit a round head, covered with short curling hair of the reddish Saxon tinge, out of which, like a full moon, shone a rosy, good-tempered face. The head and face were evidently pushed in first by way of experiment, and meeting with no rebuff, a pair of wide shoulders followed, and then, with a long elephantine stride, Giles Walsh, the eldest son of Sir John, stood by Karina's side, his wide mouth nearly reaching from ear to ear, as blushing and smiling he laid down at Karina's feet a large bunch of wild marsh mary-buds.

"Ah, see, Giles, how thou hast trampled on the flowers with thy big foot! Thy foot would crush a stone to powder, much more my daffodils. Aye, though they are

beauties, these mary-buds," she said. "Put them in the pot for a posy on the hearth, and then, be not affronted Giles, but take thy large highness off to the buttery and scan the platter for breaking thy fast—more in thy way than scanning thy Latin lesson I trow."

But Giles hesitated. He was dull and heavy, but he had eyes to see, and they lingered on the form of his fair kinswoman as she went softly about her work, and he stood stock still, spell-bound. At last he grunted out, in a low, deep voice,—

"And canst thou not give me a word, Karina? I was up at daybreak, and hunting for the flowers by the pool. Give me a word, and ——" he bent down as if to kiss her, but she skilfully avoided him.

"I have no time to stand loitering here, and hark!"

A sharp voice was now heard, and the patter of light footsteps.

"Karina, where art thou? For shame, thus idling with a parcel of flowers, and you too,"—turning to her son—"a lie-a-bed, I know, except when the fit takes you. For shame, Karina, to tempt the lout to waste his precious hours gallivanting here, and the milk all waiting in the churn, and the great pasty caught by the fire, and not a bit will the master taste. How can I be in kitchen and dairy at one and the same time, and so put out of sorts as I am by the ill-stewed lampreys at Sir Amyas Hallowell's? No wonder, when his minx of a wife sits playing her mandoline and sorting her silks the live-long day! And worse than the ill-stewed lampreys was Will Tyndale's tongue. I cry shame on him, and told him so. Who is he, to hold himself like a peacock amongst those who are his betters; and as to his learning, I have had enough on't. There is Joan pining and

puling, and Cicely;—but I must away, and come with me, Karina, and make thyself handy for once.”

Lady or Dame Marjory Walsh was a little agile woman, whose sharp eyes looked well to the ways of her household, who kept her maidens and men in such prime order, that the Manor House of Chipping Sodbury was celebrated in the country side for providing the best cheer for man and beast, and any who lodged under that hospitable roof left it with regret. What if the sharp eyes were accompanied by a sharp tongue? Dame Margery's bark was worse than her bite, and she was a true friend, if a somewhat exacting one. The ladies of those times lived for the most part a busy, thrifty life. Needle-craft and the spinning wheel were recreations.

Books were as yet few; and though the love of learning was spreading rapidly, and women like Margaret More caught the spirit of the Greek text, and were no mean Latin scholars, the great majority of English women were content to go on in the old groove, and did not seek to be wiser than their mothers.

CHAPTER II.

THE MASTER AND THE PUPILS.

THE pupils were all gathered in the study at the Manor soon after morning prayer in the church. Joan, a pale delicate girl of seventeen, was brooding over a book, her hand pressed to her forehead, and her whole attitude one of painful study. She had no eyes for the beautiful mary-buds, shining like gold on the hearth, nor the daffodils which Karina had pricked about in every place, — two large bunches nodding with their spiral leaves in the stag's horns, which were crossed over the

low doorway. She was puzzling over a passage in Sallust, and sighing heavily. Next her sat a feminine edition of Giles, a large healthy girl of sixteen, whose rosy lips were parted to show a row of white teeth, as with a string she tied a big bee in a fragment of parchment and hung it at the back of her sister's hair.

The humming and buzzing of the prisoner roused Joan. She shook her head, and the bee buzzed more furiously than ever, while Joan turned her head to the right and left to discover her tormentor.

"Peace, Cicely!" said Karina. "Do not make merry now, when we all want quiet," and taking the paper bag from Joan's head, she said,—

"See, I will let the prisoner free. An early bee, and an example to idle shallowpates like thee."

"Hold!" said Giles, coming from his desk at the farther end of the room with one elephantine stride. "It will sting thee, Karina; do not let it loose in the room. It will be enraged, and fly out to avenge itself. Have a care!"

He snatched the bag from her hand, and in doing so the string loosened, and the bee bounced out straight at the nearest point, which happened to be poor Giles' nose.

Peals of laughter rang from Cicely and Harry, while Karina raised her hand and caught the provoking Cicely a box on the ear.

Giles, smarting with pain, disdained to make any lamentation, but Joan's tender heart was much distressed. She was running hastily from the room, when she encountered the tutor on the threshold.

"A very Babel," he said. "If you must play, play at the right time—as the wise man saith, there is a time for all things; but Giles, what is amiss?—weeping over a tough bit of thy lesson?"

"A bee has stung him right on the tip of his nose," said Harry. "Cicely tied one up in a bag, and Karina let it out in Giles' face."

"It is nothing," said Giles, "it is nothing."

"It is something," said Cicely, "to get a box on the ear. Verily, Master Tyndale, I shall be deaf for all your teaching to-day."

"My teaching to-day will be short. I am departing for a short space."

"Departing whither?" asked Karina. "You will come back," she said eagerly.

"No doubt, if God will; but I am anxious to take counsel of God and man ere I decide my future. I have yet space for an hour's reading. I will give you the portion of the Holy Word which I writ out last night when you were all slumbering."

"That will be a brave way of getting free of lessons," said Cicely. "With all my heart I will place the books on the desk."

And now there was another tap at the door, and in came a tall man of a most winning countenance, and a voice which had the ring of culture in it—different indeed to Giles' low tones, which seemed to ascend from his heavy buskins, or the boy Harry's loud, harsh rattle.

"Aye then, good Cousin, you are welcome, and just in time: for we begin, after much let and hindrance, a reading which will find favour with you. See, here is the Greek text—take the book, and Karina can share it. No, no, thy great hand must not touch it, good Giles,"—as Giles' brow darkened—"there is no sin in thy dulness, man; but an I can get thee to spell out thy own tongue decently, I may rest on that. Karina has wits enough to learn all the tongues in Christendom."

"And let me see the next, Father Tyndale." It

was Joan who spoke. "Prythee let me lean over the volume."

"Aye, poor child, as thou wilt; but do not work thy brain too hard. Thy mother saith it is my fault."

"I want to learn," interposed Joan. "I want to be lifted up above all these foolish things which surround me here."

"Hearken now," said Cicely, "what puffed-up conceit! didst ever hear the like?" while Harry burst out with one of his rough boyish laughs at his sister's expense.

"Joan is only fit for a convent," he said. "It would be a fine thing to shut her pale face up at Almondsbury to-morrow, forsooth!"

"Hush, boy!" said the new comer; "how canst thou be so mean as to level gibes at thy sister? Come hither, Joan; see, here is the place, and do you sit down by Mistress Karina, and I will stand by and look over."

"The book is open at the place, Sir William?" John Huchyns asked.

"Yes, at the Epistle to the Corinthians. I pray you, Cicely, be quiet; and you, Harry, mend your manners, or, forsooth, I see you the other side of the door." He tapped on the desk, and the reading began.

I doubt if the words rendered into his own tongue were ever spoken with more effect than on that spring morning—and what a picture it was! The young heads bending over the text, Karina's dark locks contrasting with Joan's pale, flaxen braids, and above, the stately figure of John Huchyns-Tyndale of Stinchcombe, who was near of kin to the tutor, and had of late questioned him often on his work of rendering the New Testament into English.

John Huchyns-Tyndale was exceptionally tall; his figure was well proportioned, and his limbs well knit and

showing great strength. As he leaned on the back of the bench where the two girls sat, the book between them, he had to stoop low before he could fold his arms across the ledge. His doublet was slashed with dark green, and on his wrist was twisted the cord and bells of a falcon. He had been flying at game in his walk from Stinchcombe, but the tired falcon was nestling unchained in the flap of the inner vest of her master, her head under her wing asleep.

John Huchyns' face was tanned with exposure to all weathers. For the country gentlemen or yeomen of those days looked after their own stock, knew their head of cattle collectively and separately, and kept their eye on herd and flock, trusting less to others than to themselves.

John Huchyns-Tyndale's features were well cut, and his chin and upper lip were shaded with a soft light beard. His thick curling hair was of a darker hue, and dark lashes shaded his blue eyes.

Giles, moody and jealous, muttered something about "folks standing in the light, so that those on t'other side of the table could not see the letters."

"There's light enow for thee, Giles," said Cicely, "who scarce know an English word from a Greek."

"Hush now, the master is beginning."

All this time William Tyndale had been conning his precious manuscript, and a smile broke over his face, as at last he cleared his throat and said:—

"Hearken, children, and you, my kinsman, these are good words. Say, are they not as the dew of Hermon, as the small rain upon the tender herb? Methinks the holy Apostle, when he wrote them, must have called to mind many an one who would find in them the balm for wounds, the ointment for sores, the tuning-fork for the discordant machine. May the Spirit of the living God

int : int

int : int

int : int : int

shine down on our hearts, as we read, as the April sun is shining on the golden blossoms of yon mary-buds."

Sonorous and full was the voice which now read:—

* "Though I speke with the tonges of men and angels, and yet had no love, I were even as soundynge brasse, and as tynklynge cymball, and though I coulde prophesy and understande all secretes and all knowledge, yea if I had all fayth so that I could move mountayns oute of their places, and yet had no love, I were nothyng.

"And though I bestowed all my gooddes to fede the poore, and though I gave my body even that I burned, and yet have no love, it profeteth me nothyng. Love suffreth longe and is corteous, love envieth nott, love doth not frawdly, swelleth not, dealeth not dishonestly. Seketh nott her awne, is not provoked to anger, thynketh not evyll, reioyseth not in iniquitie but reioyseth in the truth, suffreth all thynges, beleveth all thynges, endureth in all thynges.

"Though that prophesyng fayle, other tonges shall cease, or knowledge vanysshe awaye, yet love falleth never awaye.

"For oure knowledge is unparfet, and oure prophesyng is unparfet, but when thatt which is parfet is come, then thatt which is unparfet shall be done awaye.

"When I was a chylde, I spake as a chylde, I understode as a chylde, I ymmagened as a chylde. But as sone as I was a man, I put awaye all childesshnes.

"Nowe we se in a glasse even in a darke speakynge, but then shall we se face to face. Nowe I knowe unparfectly, but then shall I knowe even as I am known.

"Nowe abideth fayth, hope and love, even these thre, but the chefe of these is love.

* The quotations from the New Testament are taken from the edition of William Tyndale's Version published by S. Bagster.

"Yea, the greatest, and the chefest. Yea, for it abideth ever. And good-morrow to you, masters," Tyndale said, turning his head to look at the open window where two heads were visible. Like a blot on the fair spring day was one of these faces—pointed nose and chin, keen hungry black eyes, hair cut in the tonsure, a long thin hand clutching the frame of the lattice,—for Brother Anthony, undignified as it seemed, was maintaining his post of observation on a barrel, rolled up against the side of the house, and as Tyndale greeted him the barrel rolled with the start he gave, and he would have caught a sharp fall, had not another and stronger arm saved him.

Sir John Walsh was the other listener; his six feet and more of stature had no need to add to height by an empty barrel. It was not the first time he had stood under that sunny window to hear what his children were learning from the tutor. He liked to hear unseen, and "I get a lesson myself, sweetheart," he would say to his wife; "it is a wonderful gift our tutor hath."

To-day the worthy knight had but just taken up his position when Brother Anthony's little lean spare form was seen gliding up the avenue of elms, from the village. He was a brother of the order of friars who traversed the country between Gloucester monastery, Prinknash, and Berkeley. These brothers were always received as welcome guests by the gentry, the farmers, and the poor. None refused to share a crust with a devout monk: and then they were in a quiet way newsmongers, and brought stories of the neighbourhood, and took away in their wallets a good deal besides the contributions for their order, for which they perambulated the country side.

Brother Anthony was, however, a little above the ordinary level of his order. He was better read and

better taught; for the ignorance of some of these men was denser than we can now realize, and they truly lived when thick darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people.

Brother Anthony's ears were of the sharpest, and his eyes of the keenest. Rumours of the tutor's work at Sodbury Manor had got afloat. His opinions he knew he did not keep to himself, and the Abbot of Gloucester was already beginning to find he must take notice of them. A cultured man himself, and in advance of his time, noted for many grand deeds of beneficence in the city and county, Abbot Parker had a wholesome fear of the too free handling of the Word of God amongst the people; and yet, like many another in those days, he heard the inner voice saying to him, in the words he so often chanted in his Abbey:—

“He giveth understandynge to the simple.”

And again:—

“The wayfarer, though a fool, cannot err therein.”

“Good morrow, Brother Anthony,” Tyndale said again; “methinks you had as lief enter and hear the Word again.”

The head of Brother Anthony had disappeared, but his voice was yet heard in a low grating tone as he talked to Sir John.

“And he hath been preaching in the church yonder?”

“Yes, yes; but only while our own priest is sick. He only helps out our spiritual need, and says mass and matins and evensong too when Father Crawley is sick. I am well satisfied with our chaplain, and there is that stuff in him which is not in ordinary folk.”

Brother Anthony bridled at this speech.

“Aye, aye; there is the stuff that rank heretics are made of. I trow, Sir John, the day cometh when there

will be a burning of such stuff as will kindle a light from one end of this realm to another. Hist, then, I do not desire argument with such as he, and he cometh out of the house with a troop at his heels."

"Well, well; you'll stay for midday meal; it is even now served."

Brother Anthony was not of "the stuff" to refuse this invitation; indeed, he had turned out of his way to call at Sodbury Manor for no other reason than to tarry there for dinner. He now advanced to meet Dame Marjory Walsh with a cringing fawning manner, taking in all the time that John Huchyns was in earnest conversation with the dark-eyed Karina, and that William Tyndale was walking down the avenue with his wallet over his shoulder.

Sir John hastened after him.

"Hillo there, hi!" William Tyndale turned and retraced his steps, doffing his cap respectfully.

"Whither away then, Tyndale?"

"I crave leave to be absent for two or three days, as I said."

"Look you, Tyndale, don't go and run your head into a noose. Keep quiet, man, and study and welcome, and teach my children all that befits scholars to learn, but go not forth to sow a bitter harvest for thyself and all connected with thee."

"Nay, nay, Sir John," was the reply, with a smile which illuminated his face; "nay, nay; I go to sow a seed which shall bring forth fruit for the healing of the nation. I am but going to Prinknash, where the Prior is abiding with a handful of brothers, and perchance to Gloucester. There is a brother in the scriptorium there I want a word with; I thought, too, that after last night's storm

my absence would bring a lull. But I am your servant, Sir John; say the word, and I return."

"Nay, I would not insist on this; but prythee no preachments at Bristol, and bringing down the wrath of thy superiors; and take thy meal before starting."

"Nay, kind sir," said Tyndale, with another of those bright smiles, which changed his whole face in a minute; "nay, kind sir, I leave one behind to eat my share and his own too. His trencher will bear replenishing, and see that the grace cup is not filled for too deep a draught."

Sir John burst into a hearty laugh as he turned on his heel.

"I will," said he. "I know not how yon brother packs all the food away; it neither fattens him, nor makes him good company, that I know of."

Sir John's large table was well filled with divers viands, and Brother Anthony did his duty by a huge pasty which graced the head of the board, literally groaning with the weight of provisions. Home-brewed ale and light canary wine passed freely round, and a huge sirloin of beef, garnished with various herbs, was attacked again and again by the young men. It was noticeable in those days that John Huchyns drank only water, and Karina and Joan followed his example.

The midday meal was never a very prolonged one; it meant business, and when it was over the family rose, and the serving maids and men took their places. Conversation had been particularly flat on this occasion, and some round pellets of bread rolled up by Harry, and levelled now and then at his sister, was the only diversion.

"If the tutor were here, you would not dare to do it," Joan said. "He can keep thee in order."

"Be not so crabbed, Joan," Cicely said; "the boy means no harm."

"Joan is more like an old grandam than a maid of seventeen," Sir John said. "Come hither, little one; aye, for shame; what pale wan cheeks! Now, mind me, no more books for thee the next month to come. Dost hear, wife, this child suffers from over teaching. Take to thy needle and thy household ways, like thy mother before thee, and no more of these books!"

"Oh, father!" Joan exclaimed, "prythee do not take from me my joy in life, prythee!"

The girl's voice was choked with tears, and Karina, going up to her, said,—

"Come out into the pleasance, Joan; the air here is filled with the odours of meats and wine."

"Yes, yes," said Dame Marjory; "and then come to me in the still-room. I have a potion to prepare for old Gammer Hillston; she is terribly afflicted with asthma, and I have some spider-wort and aniseed I want to pound and mix. Come, girls, there's a time for all things," and Dame Marjory pushing back her bench was a signal for every one to do the same, with the single exception of Brother Anthony; he had tasted of pasty and quaffed ale and canary till they overcame him, and his head was leaning against the back of the bench, his mouth wide open, and his breath coming in heavy sonorous snores.

Giles was in the act of aiming a pellet at the inviting chasm, and Harry, having slipped behind, was fastening the cord round Brother Anthony's waist to the ledge of the bench, when Sir John, turning sharply, roared in a voice of thunder,—

"Giles, Harry, hold! No guest at my board is to be made a Tom-fool of by you, you young curs! Brother Anthony, an it please you we'll take a nap in my chamber, and then look round the stock; the abbot himself cannot show a finer lot of yearlings than I can boast."

Brother Anthony shook himself from his drowsiness, and amidst the hardly suppressed laughter of the youngsters and that of the men and maids now thronging the hall, he said,—

“A nap, aye: no, thanks, good Sir John; I never nap at this hour, never. I am the favourite reader in our refectory; but let me not hinder you, good Sir John.”

The good knight laughed now, and encouraged by their father’s mirth, Giles and Harry, and even John Huchyns, joined in a merry peal at the Brother’s expense, which made the old rafters ring again.

Meantime, her arm round Joan, Karina was leading her along the grassy terrace, sown thick with daisies, to a seat under a clump of budding beeches, which stood at the end. Poor Joan was weakly and overwrought; now-a-days we should call her hysterical, and say she suffered from nervous debility. Karina was her chief friend and protectress, and now, as they sat down on the bench, the poor child laid her head against Karina’s breast, and sobbing, said,—

“Karina, crave leave for me to study; I can’t live without it. I do desire to read the Word of the Lord in my closet, in the tongue in which it was writ. If thou wilt promise to tell no one—not a soul—I will tell thee that I have had two wondrous visions. In the dead of night, when Cicely was sleeping, I saw a great light,—flames and smoke and fire,—and in it I saw the form of Master Tyndale, and *thy* form, and my own, and another, and it was the crucifix above all, and the face of the Lord above the fire; and I heard a voice reading out of a book,—the book was in Master Tyndale’s hand, but it was not his voice, and the words were the same as he read—‘Every man’s work shall be proved by fire.’ I have had the vision twice, and I fear to sleep lest it return.”

"Joan, it is thy poor head that is amiss. Thy father is right in this—thou needest air, and quiet, and rest; no books, but all that lies open before thee this spring time. What dost say? Shall I ask Katherine Huchyns* to have thee for awhile at Inclyff? Katherine is as a draught of fresh water to the thirsty; there is less moiling and toiling there. I will see to it."

"No, no, not unless thou canst come with me. If I slept with thee, Karina, I might not see these visions; but Cicely scoffs and gibes, and rates me for calling out. But here comes Master John Huchyns. Let me go! unhand me, Karina!" and springing to her feet, Joan was gone with the swift flight of a bird escaped from the net.

"Alas, poor child!" John Huchyns said as he came up to Karina; "methinks she is sick. What ails her, Karina? She minds me of this little companion of mine: and unfastening his doublet, the bright-eyed little hawk, set loose, hopped to his master's wrist, and winking its eyes, surveyed Karina with side-long glances.

CHAPTER III.

INCLYFF.

"POOR Joan is weakly, and filled with strange fancies," Karina said, softly stroking the glossy plumage of the pet falcon with her taper fingers. "Methinks if she could tarry awhile with your sister it would be wholesome for her."

John Huchyns' eyes kindled with pleasure. "An thou wilt bring the child, it will be as salve for all sores."

* In 1478 two distinct households or families lived or held lands in Stinchcombe, both bearing the name of Huchyns with Tyndale, and both subsequently known by the name of Tyndale only.

Karina's colour rose. "Nay, I am wanted here. There is much to be done in the dairy and the house, and there is the homespun linen to fashion, and even now I am wanted in the still room about Gammer Hillston's potion."

"Tarry yet a few minutes, Karina," the young man said, "I feel vexed in soul about my kinsman Sir William Tyndale.* What if he bring this household into trouble? I hear rumours that he is to be summoned to appear before the ordinary, for what he denounced at the Cross, on the College Green at Bristol. Methinks we, as dutiful children of the Church, can have no call to meddle where wiser heads rule wisely. That poor distraught maiden is one fair sample of what these notions can do. Let William Tyndale keep his heresy quiet."

Karina raised her dark eyes to the young man's face, as she said: "No man can gainsay the Word of God. And that Word giveth life."

"It is not meet to throw it forth for the ignorant. It is all fair and right that you and I should hear what he read to-day in our own tongue; but take old Gammer Hillston for example, what profit to her to mumble out words which bring no meaning?"

"Ah, then, Master Huchyns," said Karina, "I have you there. Would not her own tongue have a meaning which her whispered Paternosters and Ave Marias in Latin can never have? And how shall she or any of our poor folk benefit from the Gospeller, when he reads in an unknown language the Word of life in the church?"

"Do not, I pray you, fair Mistress Mountjoy, talk after this fashion. Sharp eyes are on you, and ears are open. Think you yon guzzling monk is here with no

* Before the Reformation the title of "Sir" was commonly given to priests. After the Reformation it gradually gave place to Reverend.

intention? Nay, fair lady, keep quiet, and counsel my kinsman to do the same, nor lend himself to contention as yester-e'en I hear he did. And now to turn to pleasant matters. May I send round the pillion to-morrow for you and that brain-struck Joan, craving Dame Marjory's leave?"

But Karina did not answer. John Huchyns' words had set her thinking, and there came into her dark southern eyes a strange wistful look—not at John Huchyns, who gazed on her with unconcealed admiration; not at the peacocks that came strutting up the terrace with their tails full spread; not at the distant figures of the two boys who were rolling about the balls on the bowling green—Karina saw none of these things now: Joan's vision, Joan's dream—if it really came to that, the fiery trial, should she keep silence?

But Cicely's quick bouncing step was now heard.

"Karina, I have pounded while you have gossiped. It is all mixed with the syrup, and is in the gallipot, tied down with bladder. Mother said I was handy for once. Now reward me. Carry it to the cottage of the old grunting dame, and these groats mother sends, and let me go and have a turn at the balls with the boys. Here, Karina!" And, swinging the jar backwards and forwards by the cord with which it was fastened, Cicely cried, "Hi, catch!"

John Huchyns adroitly caught the pot, or it would have fallen, and its contents been spilled: and Cicely having got rid of her burden rushed off to her brothers.

"They are diverse natures," John Huchyns said; "the two sisters,—but I prefer the gentler of the two, brain-sick though she be. Now if you carry that physic, may I be your attendant, Mistress Mountjoy?"

"Methinks I must fetch my hood, for the wind in the

shade tells us it is but May-time yet. I need not detain you," she said.

"You know," John Huchyns began, and stopped, simply adding after a pause—"I will await your pleasure here."

Before many minutes had elapsed the two were leaving the Manor grounds, and passing by a field path towards a cluster of poor huts on the hill-side. Karina was silent at first, but soon began to chat of many things in a way which John Huchyns delighted to hear.

"In all this bright world," Karina was saying, "it is hard to think of the sorrow and the pain which some sore hearts endure. I am thinking oftentimes of my late dear mistress, the Queen's Highness. Sir Harry Gilford's son, Master Amyas, told stories of her troubles, and that she has a foe, not a friend, in my Lord Cardinal Wolsey."

"He is a dangerous enemy methinks for the Queen or for any one. It is said he loseth favour with his Majesty, and that he is seeking some way out of it, by which the Queen will suffer loss."

"Ah! I know it," Karina said. "Well might my mother often say that the favour of princes was as a broken reed to trust to. Here amongst these hills and valleys we seem so far from the gay world in which once I lived."

"Dost thou wish to return thither, Karina?"

"Nay; I liked some of the grand sights well enow, and the Queen's Highness was ever kind to me; but I was a child then, and thought as a child. Now it is different."

"Now thou art a woman, and dost not care for shows and pageants?"

"I will not say that," Karina answered. "I like a

brave show. I can fancy I now see the golden arbour set up for the King's marriage festivities in the White Hall at Westminster. I was but a little maid of seven, and my dear mother lifted me on high to see the gaudy sight—all flowers of gold, and the letters 'H' and 'K' everywhere, and the lords and the King all in purple satin; and then I mind how affrighted I was at the rout in the outer hall, when all the people rushed for bits of the gilt, and when his Majesty bid the ladies come and pluck the devices from his dress and that of the nobles. The people, not content with despoiling the golden arbour, came and took away every bit of adornment. But the king laughed. My mother often spake of it afterwards, and said he chucked me under the chin, and vowed I was as grave as her Highness the Queen, who did not like such noisy revels. And now here is Gammer Hillston's cottage. Adieu, Master Huchyns,"—and Karina stepped lightly into the cottage.

"I will tarry for you," John Huchyns said at the door.

"Nay, wherefore? I shall be in no haste to leave, once in; the old dame likes well to keep me."

"But it will be sundown ere long; the Spring days are short."

"The bell has not rung for evensong yet. There is time and to spare. It is you who ought to be turning homewards, who have miles to walk."

"And I may send for you and Joan to-morrow? Say 'Yes,' Karina," he pleaded.

"For Joan—with her mother's leave;" and then the door was closed, and John Huchyns turned reluctantly away.

How beautiful she was, he thought; how winsome—now grave, now gay—but always tender and gentle as befitted a woman. If only he could summon courage

to ask her to be his wife—take her away from the daily influence of his kinsman—make her the mistress of Inclyff—but, alas! there were many *but*s. His sister Katherine had no love for the fair Karina. She inveighed against her Spanish origin, her bright garments, her book-learning, her mandoline, her graceful dancing last Yule-tide, when there was a succession of festivities at the houses in the neighbourhood.

Katherine was a young woman of decided opinions, a staunch adherent of the Church and its forms and ceremonies, zealous in all things but that love which “thinketh no evil”; sharp and decided in voice and manner, an excellent housewife, and devoted to the real interests of her brother—but she said to herself again and again, like one of old—“If John should take to wife a daughter of Heth, what good would my life do me?”

We may be sure then that when, scarcely in time for supper, John Huchyns drew near his home that evening, he felt some difficulty in divulging his plan to his sister.

“And where hast been all day?” was her greeting when he entered the hall where the supper was spread—the men and maids sitting down in the old-fashioned style at the lower end of the board, and eating at the same time with their superiors. It was only in the households of the upper classes that this practice was falling into disuse.

“There’s somewhat amiss with the brindled cow, John,” Katherine began, “and the three lambs have died that were sick yester-e’en. It’s an ill case in any household when the master’s away.”

“I could not have kept life in the lambs, Kate, or put the brindled cow right, could I? I went out with Fanfan early and had some sport—no uncommon case.”

“Thy pouch is not over full,” was Katherine’s retort.

"Methinks Fanfan did not fly all thy game. Thy game is in a cage, if I am not mistaken. Birds of the air carry matters, and so do kinsmen. Will Tyndale called in here on his way to Prinknash. And I have had another preachment. Father Hunt is right, and that wrong-headed Will is bringing the house down on his head—aye, and on the heads of some I could name. Have a care thy pate is not cracked by some stone thrown at him!"

John Huchyns had learned long ago that silence is golden, and let his sister have her say.

She was a tall, well-proportioned woman, of decided agricultural tastes. When her father died, and she and John were left to the joint possession of Inclyff, Katherine was the ruling spirit. She was strong in her adherence to all the customs of her fathers, hating any reform which jarred with her preconceived notions—a woman who answered well to the description of the censorious small people or splendid bigots which Carlyle says the want of sympathy has made in all ages of the Church. She lived in her present, shut in by the lofty hills which rise around these valleys, not softening towards weakness or sin, but hardening herself against the weak or the erring one.

John watched his opportunity, and following Katherine to the farther end of the hall, where she had her distaff and wheel, he said:—

"Our neighbour Sir John Walsh's daughter is sick—the little pale thin one with the big brow. I wish thou couldst have her here at Inclyff for a space. We are higher up the hill, and there's a fresher air; and then there is your rennet and whey—there's nothing like them in all the country-side."

Katherine, who was disentangling a skein of her

flax, looked up at her brother with her sharp, piercing glance.

"A pretty thing, truly, if a knight's child must come to a plain yeoman's roof to be nurtured! Tut, tut, John, bid them feed her with their own curds and rennet—forsooth, I'll have none of it!"

John Huchyns knew that his sister often did come round when last expected, so he went quietly on:—

"The child is overwrought by Will Tyndale's teaching—half-crazed with book-learning, and full of quirks and fancies—dreams and such like. You need not be at much pains with the girl, for Mistress Mountjoy will come to tend her."

"Let her tend her at Sodbury then, not here," and Katherine broke into a provoking laugh. "Nay, nay, John; I am not to be caught by your net. A well-laid scheme, but it won't answer. I'll have none of Joan Walsh, nor Mistress Karina Mountjoy, for the matter of that."

John Huchyns drew himself up to his full height. His sister's mocking laugh always irritated him.

"I had a notion," he said, "that this house was mine as well as yours—share and share alike. The guest chamber is empty, and I shall send the mare, brown Bet, and the pillion over to Sodbury to-morrow, or next day, for the sick child and her care-taker, Mistress Mountjoy."

"An' you may nurse the sick child yourself, John. And, mind you, no heretic stuff here. I'll have none on't, as I told Will Tyndale only this very day."

John Huchyns turned away. He had a quiet persistency about him which carried a point often with his sister when opposition would have lost the day. He knew her well, and the next day he expected to see the guest chamber prepared, and the nest made ready for

the birds, if only he could catch them; and John Huchyns knew a great deal hung on that "if."

He went round the place after supper, as was his custom, to see that all was safe for the night. The women-kind of those times, mistress and maids, were usually in their beds at sunset; and by eight o'clock that spring evening a hush had fallen over Inclyff and scarcely a sound was heard. A yew-tree hedge ran at the bottom of the bowling green, and a raised path under it ran parallel with the road. As John Huchyns passed along he heard voices in the road below.

"He preaches all manner of ill doctrine," said a voice with a nasal twang. "I have been over at Sodbury to-day, and heard with mine own ears what I could not have given credit to—no, not even from the Prior, an he had told me."

"Well, well," said the other voice, "we must be on guard. William Tyndale dare not enter my church, Brother Anthony, and he knows it. Taking part with that foul-mouthed heretic in Germany! And as to Erasmus, of whom they make such a rant—a poor, wizen-faced fellow, with his prate about Greek! Greek, forsooth! Latin is the tongue of the Church and of the saints. We want no Greek. What has done for our fathers will do for us. The Latin tongue is all well and good. I'd say Paternoster and Ave Maria with the best; but Greek, I'll have none of it. But Greek or no Greek, we must rid the country of William Tyndale."

"Never fear, never fear," said Brother Anthony with a snort. "He'll be up before the ordinary before Whitsuntide. I've not tramped about here for nought."

"Will you turn in with me and sup, Brother Anthony?"

Brother Anthony had every intention of doing so:

and then the voices and the steps were soon out of John Huchyns' hearing.

"I don't like playing eavesdropper," he said to himself, "but things are looking serious. I would I could get Karina away from the Manor while the storm is brewing. She would as lief say she wished Will Tyndale well as she would say she loved the Gospels in the English tongue. But what dangers surround her, friendless and orphan as she is! And yet in what a state is our country! We are in no wise the better for our Church in substantial matters. A Medici our so-called bishop, and never showing his face amongst us! Then my Lord Cardinal filling his coffers thereby and grinding all round. There's a hitch somewhere,—this love of greed made the excuse of granting pardon for sin! What words were those I heard Will Tyndale uttering aloud as he walked one day—

"'We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.'

"It does not look as if money had aught to do with it; and all I pay for the repose of our father's and our mother's souls, where does it go to? Not always for good, I warrant; and yet, if indeed these fires of purgatory are tormenting that good mother of mine, it would be base to grudge it. And Katherine may be right: it would bring down on us added torment if we neglected this duty. It is all a sore puzzle and strait. But one may think one's brains to tatters and never come to the answer. It is best to go on as others have gone on, and avoid contentious wrangling. I wish Kate would hold her tongue about it all; above all that she would not prate about Mistress Mountjoy. But women-kind must have their speech."

He turned to go indoors. Above him was the dark

blue arch of heaven where the stars were shining in all their silent glory. The budding trees which clothed the heights above Inclyff were motionless, and below in the valley was the murmur of a little stream which came running down from the Cotswolds and made soft music.

John Huchyns' was a noble nature, and touched with the tenderness which is often born of great bodily strength. He had never been to the seat of learning like many of his kinsfolk: but he had some education nevertheless, having been sent in boyhood to live in the household of the Abbot for a time to be taught in the Gloucester Monastery school.

The early death of both parents had recalled him to Inclyff, where he and his sister made, as we have seen, a home. There he led the life of what we now call that of the country gentleman, farming his own land and having a good following of men on the small estate.

As he looked up to-night at the darkly blue heaven, where the soft influence of Pleiades was shed and Orion's belt shone across the sky, there came to his soul an aspiration after higher and holier things—a longing, wordless but sincere, to shake off the trammels which held him, as habit does hold us all, and be free. It is hard for us to put ourselves in the attitude of soul in which we find John Huchyns, and hundreds like him, at that time; but it is good to try to do so, that the contrast may strike us more forcibly between then and now, and that we may be doubly thankful for our greater advantages and clearer light.

“See then that ye walk as children of the light,” may well be the text of the sermon for us all.

The great cloud of men's superstitions, ignorance, and false doctrines had shadowed the Church for centuries; but as the sun arises the darkness shall disperse, and the

spirits of men like John Huchyns shall be no more troubled with fears about purgatorial fires and money paid for forgiven sins. For the Book shall be opened, and the light shall shine on the page wherein is written—

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”

How these and like words were to flash out upon the longing eyes of thousands in England before John Huchyns was laid to rest in the village churchyard of his native county, he little dreamed on that April night. With a sigh he drew the heavy bolt of the entrance door, and calling his deerhound Wolf, who pattered up the oaken staircase behind his master to keep guard at his chamber door, lay down on his bed to sleep the sound unbroken sleep of early manhood till day broke over the Cotswolds once more.

CHAPTER IV.

A MEETING ON THE ROAD.

WHEN he parted with Sir John, in Sodbury Park, William Tyndale pursued his way through the country on foot, his book in his hand, his thoughts occupied with certain difficulties in a rendering of a phrase in Erasmus' "Enchiridion," which he was translating as a reply to Dame Marjory Walsh's reprimand for his plain speaking. He thought it was a good weapon to use in defence of his opinions, and on this April day he was engaged with it as he walked.

William Tyndale was an even-paced pedestrian; he never hurried, but he never loitered, and he could get over the ground without faltering for hills or rugged paths. His destination to-day was Prinknash, and to get

there before day closed was a long stretch. But Tyndale knew the road, and scaled the hills, and took short cuts through the valleys, and came within sight of Painswick beacon before daylight had waned. A few lonely shepherds' and herdsmen's cottages were scattered over the broken ground which lay between Painswick and the extensive beech woods, where the quarry is hidden from which the stone used for the building of the stately cathedral of Gloucester was taken. Tyndale did not go into the town of Painswick, but skirted the brow of the hill, and, as the twilight deepened, closed his book, and gave himself up to meditation. A light twinkled here and there in the moorland, and the woods lay before him in dark masses. To his left a wide plantation of fir-trees showed clear against the daffodil sky, and now and then their mysterious murmur was brought to the ear like that of a far-off sea breaking on a pebbly shore.

William Tyndale was just entering the shadow of the woods, when a sound of a horse's feet broke the stillness, and a riderless steed trotted past him. He put out his hand and adroitly seized the bridle, calling out: "Ho, ho, good steed! and where's thy master?"

The horse had the usual accoutrements of those days—the saddle-bows were furnished with a rapier and stout cudgels, while a wallet filled with provisions and clothing hung from them. In the fading light William Tyndale could see that the horse had carried a master belonging to the upper classes.

"Some young gallant, doubtless, who is out to see the world. Well, then, we must look after him, good steed. He can scarcely have been attacked by robbers, or these weapons would show some signs of usage. But let us go back the way you came, and find your master!"

William Tyndale threw the reins over his arm, and

the horse quietly turned to follow him into the shadow of the woods, through which a road ran—a good firm road made by the Romans when they had their posting station in this neighbourhood, and called by them *Via Viridariensis*.

Tyndale had not gone many yards into the wood when a voice was heard:—

“Who goes there? That cursed brute tripped against a fallen tree and pitched me over his head. Whoever you are, help me up. I’ve got an ugly hurt in my leg.”

“Methought a youngster like you would have had a firmer grip of the saddle,” Tyndale said significantly; “but I’ll do what in me lies to help you. Hold fast!” and very soon Tyndale’s strong arm had raised the young man to his feet.

“A priest, I see, by your garments; a priest verily, not like him in the Gospel who passed by on t’other side.”

It was not often that the Gospels were quoted in ordinary talk by laymen, for they were, as we know, all but a sealed book.

“Glad you know aught of the Word of God,” Tyndale said drily; “but there is written therein that ‘strong wine mocketh.’ Methinks you have had more of mine host’s strong ale than your head can carry, or this steady-going horse would not have tripped you over by a stumble.”

A loud laugh was the reply, and it was followed by a somewhat unmanly scream, as the sprained leg was put to the ground, and the unseated horseman tried to stand.

“Curse the brute,” he muttered. “What am I to do next? Let’s have your name; do you live hard by?”

“Nay, but I am bound for the Abbot’s palace at Prinknash, and methinks if you can get as far, I can have you lodged there for the night.”

"How far is it, man?"

"Some two miles yet along the road; if I help you to your horse's back, think you you can stick there?"

"Strange if I did not. I am famous for my good horsemanship, I can tell you."

"Pity to mar it thus," as the young man reeled unsteadily against the horse and would have fallen had not Tyndale caught him.

"Tut, tut," he exclaimed, "an you get on the horse this side you'll fall off on t'other."

It did indeed seem a hopeless task to reseat the rider on the horse; but at last by dint of much hauling and pushing, interspersed with oaths and curses, the young man was in the saddle again, and the horse's head turned towards Prinknash. It was nearly dark now, and Tyndale had some difficulty in leading the horse with one hand, and every now and then steadying the rider with the other.

The pain of the sprained leg was no doubt severe; but Tyndale rebuked the young man again and again for cursing and oaths, which seemed to fall naturally from his lips.

"Better pray for help to bear pain like a Christian man," he said. "Hold these evil words, or I leave you to find your way solitary to the Prinknash gates."

"Nay, nay; prythee, do not leave me. I hate darkness, and fear hobgoblins and bad spirits. Hist, what noise is that?"

"The rustle of the breeze on the tree tops," said Tyndale quietly.

"And there—look you, look you, what black form is yonder?"

"The stump of a felled trunk," was the cool reply.

"It is a goblin! I see his arm moving. Priest as you are, exorcise the evil spirit!"

Tyndale replied this time by silence, and but slow progress was made.

Every now and then the young man called out to halt—the motion hurt his leg; and then he slipped on one side, and Tyndale had to give him a push further on the saddle.

"It is but a short space now to the gates," Tyndale said. "I hear the chapel bell ringing for vespers."

"And you never ask my name, good priest? Know, then, I am Hubert Gilford, son of Sir Harry Gilford, comptroller to the King's Grace, and he is one to reward you for your service, if so be there is aught you need at his hands. Dost hear? I am Sir Harry Gilford's son; and who are you? Why so suddenly deaf?"

"I hear," was the answer, "and I pray that God may by His goodness convert your soul, Master Hubert Gilford, and turn you from ways of folly and sin to paths of wisdom and peace. To fall half drunken from your horse is a sign and token by which I judge you not amiss, methinks. The best reward you can grant William Tyndale is to forswear excess of drink, and to cleanse your lips, by God's grace, from foul words."

"An' you speak plain, Sir William Tyndale; but sure you are not the man they talk of as the great scholar, treading hard on Erasmus's heels. If so, what are you doing on a lonely highway in Gloucestershire?"

"I will answer your questions anon more at leisure. I am William Tyndale, and what I do on this lonely highway is shown, methinks, by the aid I have rendered you. We are at the gate now; there is the light at the porter's lodge."

As the horse's feet stopped before the gate, William

Tyndale blew a note on a horn hanging by a small iron grating, and after a moment's pause the grating was drawn back, and a voice called out:—

“Who goes there?”

“We are travellers craving a night's lodging of the Abbot.”

“William Tyndale asks it for himself and Master Hubert Gilford, son of the King's Grace's Comptroller,” shouted the young man.

“Peace, peace,” said Tyndale, “no need to vaunt your parent's stock like this; methinks he might not feel proud of his sapling an he saw him now.”

Hubert Gilford would have resented this speech had he not feared to offend the man on whose word he depended for admission within the gates.

Presently the gates were thrown back, and the porter said:—

“Wish you good e'en, Sir William Tyndale. His Honour the Abbot is absent; he was summoned to Gloucester yester-night: but the reverend Dean, Father Eustace, and the Prior, Father Gregory, are in charge, and entertaining his Grace the Chancellor. You'll be welcome, Sir William, but have a care of the steep hill,” he called, as the horse began to descend the sharp slope leading to the house.

“I know the way,” Tyndale replied, “and that it needeth care in daylight. Hold fast to the saddle-bows,” he said, addressing his companion, “or you'll repent it. The way is yet long before we reach the great entrance.”

Prinknash lies on the slope of a lofty wooded hill. The old mansion, which was the summer palace of the Abbots of Gloucester, is built on a plateau midway between the highway leading from Painswick above, to the

precipitous road which leads to the village of Upton-St.-Leonards below.

When the trees are in their full summer foliage it is difficult to catch a glimpse of the house till very near it; it nestles eyrie-like amidst the encircling beeches and elms.

The dark descent was at last accomplished, and at the sound of another hanging horn at the low stone doorway of the Quadrangle, a brother came out to receive the travellers. William Tyndale explained that his companion had met with an accident from slipping off his horse, and he was at once, without further questioning, assisted to a room where a wood fire was burning on the open hearth, and a brother, who was suffering from inflammation of the lungs, was propped up on a small oak bedstead.

It was the sick room of the monastery, and not unfrequently the ailing ones were brought up from Gloucester for change of air and rest.

Two brothers who attended on this room and the patients, were now summoned to take off Hubert Gilford's clothes, and examine his hurt. Very carefully and tenderly the sprained leg was fomented and bandaged, and then the patient was assisted to another couch, like the one occupied by the sick monk. William Tyndale, meantime, was standing by the bed of the other sufferer, forgetful of his own need of rest and refreshment—forgetful of everything but the earnest wistful eyes which were fastened on him.

"Father Tyndale, do you remember me?" he whispered.

"Yes: surely you are Brother Edwyn, the most skilled hand at the copying and illuminating of the manuscripts in the Gloucester scriptorium. God's hand is here; I was on my way to seek an interview with you, anent the

last verses of the Holy Gospel of St. John. I had a mind to consult you as to the words as they stand in the Latin. But I will not weary you now; you are too sick."

"I am dying," the monk said. "I too longed to see you, but what I say must not be said now. Can you see me at day dawn? The brothers are all in chapel by five of the clock; the Abbot is absent, only the Prior is in charge, and he will not miss your presence. Hark now."

And from afar came peals of noisy mirth, which made Hubert Gilford exclaim:—

"Much I wish I could join the revel; jolly old fellows like these are good company."

"The Prior entertains guests at supper to-night," one of the nursing brothers said. "An it please you, Sir William Tyndale, will you go to the refectory and take some food, or will you that I announce you to the Prior?"

"I will not see the Prior to-night," was the answer. "I will get a crust and a draught of water in the refectory, and then betake myself to my bed. I have had a long day's march. If you will look to the needs of my fellow-traveller, that will suffice."

Master Hubert Gilford seemed well content with his quarters; he drank a hot posset offered him by one of the brothers, and dozed off in his warm corner, forgetting his sprain, and his accident, and its cause.

He had led a wild career at Oxford, and had then made a feint of applying himself to business in the house of good Sir Humphrey Monmouth: but several discreditable escapades had warned the good alderman that young Gilford was no acquisition in his household. An idler himself, he made others idle; and thus the agreement entered into between Sir Harry Gilford and Monmouth was cancelled, and Master Hubert, extracting a sum of money from his father, set off to visit rela-

tions and connections of his family in Worcestershire, intending to make Sodbury Manor one of his halting places. He was of a roving, vagrant turn, good-natured, and well-mannered when he had not drunk too deeply of the grace cup. He could rattle off stories of the great world, of the King and the Court, of the Cardinal and the Queen, which were welcomed by country-bred folk, who then lived in as much ignorance of what was passing in London as we live in ignorance of the precise daily occupation and domestic and political interests of the inhabitants of Iceland. Of course this does not apply to the families of the nobility. Some of them were pretty nearly sure to be about the Court, or attached to the enormous retinues of dukes and cardinals, bishops and archbishops. But by the small landed gentry and the scattered monasteries, news from one who had been in the heart of the great city was eagerly received, and the bearer of it made welcome to lodging and board.

There was some family connection between Sir John Walsh and the Gilfords; and though Herbert had never been at Sodbury Manor before, a brother of his—a sober, well-to-do merchant—had visited it; and incidentally mentioning on his return the charms and beauty of Karina, and describing her interest in the Queen, her mother's mistress, and for twelve years accounted her own, the younger brother was fired with a desire to see her for himself, and perhaps win her favour. There was a purpose in Hubert Gilford's visit to Sodbury of which he in his giddy foolish youth little dreamed.

William Tyndale ate his frugal supper, and then repaired to the chapel for his devotions. Terrible to his ear were the sounds of not too refined mirth, which reached even there from the Abbot's dining hall, where the Prior and sub-Prior were making merry.

“Religious house!” he sighed, “religious house! It sounds as if one mocked. All good cheer for the body, all excess in eating and drinking, all fleshly indulgence! Ah, surely the time is at hand when many an innocent one shall suffer for the guilty. Yon kindly, simple-hearted brothers, who are ready to succour those who need, and open the doors to the weary—yon dying monk with the hungry longing in his eyes—these surely merit not the scourge and the desolation which may be near. But may the Lord hasten the time for those who profane His blessed Name and spend the revenues of a noble monastery like this in the cellar and the larder. For shame on ye,” he said aloud, as an opening door let out a fresh burst of noise and revelry.

“The Abbot is away,” said the young brother as he showed William Tyndale to his cell, a small chamber in the roof, partitioned off with oak boarding from five or six of similar dimensions. “Such sounds are not heard here oftentimes.”

“I trow not,” was Tyndale’s answer.

“They have a guest of note here who arrived unwittingly in the Lord Abbot’s absence. It is the Chancellor, who is smelling out heresy as a cat sniffs a mouse. When in the dining hall I heard the name of Sir William Tyndale, and—”

“Hold!” was Tyndale’s exclamation. “When the Chancellor, or ten thousand chancellors, with my Lord Cardinal, aye, and the Pope, at their back, want Will Tyndale, he is ready; but let it be no hearsay.”

The young monk was silenced, and knelt, as was customary, to receive the benediction of a priest in full orders; and Tyndale, signing the sign of the Cross, gave him into God’s holy keeping, adding words which the young monk scarcely heard—

“Open the young man’s eyes that he may see.”

That life-long prayer of Tyndale’s—that life-long prayer of which it might truly be said—

“LABORARE EST ORARE”—

that longing of his great soul for light to shine in the hearts that were dark—it was the breath of his life, it was the aspiration with which in after time he was to give up his spirit to God—“Open the king’s eyes that he may see.”

The first faint pallor of the dawn had scarcely touched the eastern sky when William Tyndale left his cell and went softly down the corridor running along the whole length of the house to the narrow stone staircase which led to the sick room where he had promised to visit the dying man.

He stepped noiselessly and cautiously, but he need not have feared to awaken the sleepers. All the superiors in the house were slumbering heavily after last night’s feasting. Only those whose office it was that morning to celebrate the first mass in the chapel were thinking of bestirring themselves.

William Tyndale softly turned the handle of the door where he knew the sick man and Hubert Gilford lay. One of the attendant brothers was asleep, his head bowed on his knees, as he sat crouched in a corner at his post.

Hubert Gilford also slept, but one occupant of that room was wide awake. His cough had worn him out through the night, and now it had ceased he lay back on his pillows looking more like a dead than a living man; but he stretched out his hand eagerly, and beckoned Tyndale to come near.

“I want comfort,” he said; “not false comfort. I want to hear you tell me of the Lord. I have sinned

greatly. Are ages of fire before me? Tell me, William Tyndale, can prayers avail to deliver me therefrom?"

Tyndale knelt down by the young monk, for he was but young, and said:—

"There is but one deliverance—it cometh from the Cross."

"Ah, that is what I have heard all my life, and many a night I have spent groaning over this crucifix, and praying to be delivered from torment hereafter. I have doubled my Paternosters and Ave Marias, and all the while my self, my self—my sin, my sin hath laid such hold on me! Masses for the soul, can they avail? Indulgence for sins, will it profit? Saints, blessed saints, can they help us? The blessed Virgin, can she shorten one hour of torment? If so, surely there would come to me a sign; but there is no voice, neither any to speak peace. While I speak this," the monk said, "I know I speak heresy. Ah, Father Tyndale, many a time and oft as I sat in my beloved niche in the scriptorium, and heard the mass chanting for the people in the great nave, and peals of music swelling forth, I have said, 'What has poor Brother Edwyn to do with all that outside in the cloisters—writing, writing, day by day, keeping the hours in the chapel of St. Philip and St. James, but apart, apart, nought to bring me near, *near* to God.' Speak a word that shall strike home to my heart; and say, Father Tyndale, say, shall I be in those awful fires by to-morrow at this time?"

"Brother Edwyn, I have no words of mine own wherewith to speak peace. Harken to the word of the Lord as I read it in the English tongue—dear to us both. Harken to the holy Apostle Saint John:—

"Tenderly beloved, if oure hertes condempne us not, then have we trust to Godwards; and whatsoever we

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axe we shall receive of Hym, because we kepe His commandments."

"But I have kept *not* His commandments. I must be punished."

"Nay, have patience yet awhile:—'Because we kepe His commandments, and do those thynges which are pleasyng in His sight. And this is His commandment, that we beleve in the Name of His Sonne, Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave commandment.' And again, 'He that hath the Sonne hath lyfe.' And again, and above all, 'This is the tydynges which we have herde of Him, and declare unto you, that God is lyght, and in Him is no darkness at all; and the blood of Christ His Sonne cleanseth us from all synne.' Take courage, Brother Edwyn; hold fast to these words, and know what Saint Paul sayeth to such: 'We know suerly if oure erthy mancion wherein we now dwell were destroyed, that we have a bildinge ordeyned of God, and habitation not made with hondes but eternal in heven.' Methinks there is no word here of fires. I say not there be no such cleansing fires, for I know not; but this I say, and do continually affirm, that God sufficeth for these things. We will not go to sinful men to pray for our souls—to say masses for filthy lucre's sake; nay, nor to the saints, blessed though they be; nay, nor to the holy Mother herself, and wherefore? Because, sayth St. Paul the Apostle, that we are justified by fayth, we are now in the present time and onwards at peace—at one with God—thorowe oure Lorde Jesus Christ. Cleave to these words, dear Brother Edwyn; cleave with your whole soul, and be at peace."

The daylight had now strengthened, and the first beams of the sun illumined the pale upturned face of

the dying man. He spoke as one in a dream: he moved his thin hands as if writing or painting.

"I will write the words in the English. I will put the doves' heads above. See, what a scroll, what wings! The doves build their nest beneath the Cross, above the chancel end. The Holy Ghost is as a dove; yes, verily:—Ave Maria, ora pro nobis—Agnus Dei! I come."

Then William Tyndale's voice sounded calm and clear:—

"Of Thy mercy, Lord Jesus, receive this soul for which Thou didst shed Thy blood."

A smile, ineffable and beautiful, irradiated the sunken face, and then died out, as Brother Edwyn's eyes closed for ever in this world.

William Tyndale arose from his knees. A hand was laid on his shoulder, and a low voice said:—

"William Tyndale, ordained priest in the Holy Catholic Church, you are cited to appear before the Chancellor to-morrow at this time in the Great Hall of the Lord Abbot at Gloucester, to answer certain charges."

"I am ready;" was the reply; "though you bring to my charge things that I know not. See to the dead, and perform the last offices."

Soon a procession filled the room, and the accustomed forms were gone through, with candles and crosses, and much ceremony. Hubert Gilford, aroused and awe-struck, hid his face and shuddered. Death was terrible to him, and he called to William Tyndale:—

"I pray you take me hence. I cannot remain with the dead man. Return with me to Sodbury."

"Hush, hold your peace," was the severe answer. "Let the thought strike home—but for God's grace and mercy, *thou* mightest have been lying dead in the highway when day dawned this morning. A slighter fall than

thine has oft been as a summons sent to call the soul before its God."

Hubert Gilford was quiet then, and the dead monk was borne away to the mortuary chapel to await burial.

There was a great bustle in the courtyard of Prinknash about noon, when the sumpter mules were all lading for the departure of the Chancellor for the Abbey of St. Peter's, Gloucester.

The great people of the Church travelled with much pomp and circumstance, and the display which the Cardinal affected so much was imitated by as many of his inferior clergy as could afford it. The Chancellor's retinue was quite sufficient to excite the wonderment of the country people, and exceeded in number and fine trappings, for men and beast, that of the Abbot, who cared less for display than most of his brethren. Whether he willed or not, Master Hubert Gilford was doomed to another day at Prinknash, and with many lamentations, half real, half jesting, he bade his friend, Sir William Tyndale, adieu.

"We shall meet at Sodbury," he said, "unless I catch another fall. I will, methinks, offer myself as tutor in your place till you return. I hear there are pupils there, more to be desired than the louts Sir John calls his sons."

"The Chancellor bids me say, Father Tyndale, that a seat on one of the mules is reserved for you, and so it please you," said a monk entering.

"Say then to my lord, with dutiful reverence, that I crave to travel on foot as heretofore."

The messenger hesitated.

"My lord would have you understand that you are under his arrest to appear in the Great Hall by noon tomorrow."

"A prisoner then; will he please to fetter me? An it is his pleasure let him do it. But say to him, first, that my word is my fetter, and that I having vowed to stand before him, arraigned for I know not what, no power on earth shall hinder me."

The tone of superiority and determination silenced the monk, and, bowing he departed with the answer.

"Let him not slip," said one; "he is a crafty dog."

"Aye, and he has suffered the soul of Brother Edwyn to pass unassoiled from the body."

"Nay, not so altogether, and the end came swifter than any deemed possible. Yester-even Brother Edwyn had revived."

"Defence William Tyndale has none. Did he not, dispensing with holy oil and prescribed invocation, read from the Gospels words of his own choosing and in English?"

"Aye, did he! Brother Thomas, who watched last night, says he shuddered to hear his heresy at the sick man's side openly proclaimed."

"Brother Thomas snoozed through his watch, and could not have had very sharp ears for heresy," said another. "He was crouched up in a corner, sleeping like a pig, when I went to take the watch at six of the clock."

"Peace, and wrangle not," broke in the voice of a superior brother, the sub-Prior. "What sayeth Tyndale?"

"That he chooseth his feet for travel rather than an ass's back to Gloucester, your honour."

"Aye then, let him take them. Verily I think his own feet are the ass's, and if his back smart not ere long I am mistaken. Keep an eye on him, and let some of your pack watch him—if he doubles or shifts his course, pursue. Aye, there is a sharp twinge again—the spring

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wind catches one in the stomach. Fetch me a drop of canary to quaff before starting."

With a knowing wink of his eye, the brother in attendance obeyed; and in another ten minutes the Quadrangle was silent and deserted. The three or four who were commanded to have an eye on William Tyndale alone lingered behind.

The Chancellor's long procession wound up the drive to the upper road, and as the last mule disappeared with the sub-Prior and his attendants, William Tyndale went out into the terrace to take the path through the grounds which should lead to the steep, precipitous road—a shorter way to the village and to Gloucester than the other, but one avoided always by any state procession, and used mostly by pedestrians.

Bathed in the spring sunshine, the vale of Gloucester lay before William Tyndale in all its beauty. The cathedral, standing up in majestic stateliness, seen clearly at the distance of five miles, seemed as a beacon pointing him heavenwards beyond the strife and the confusion of warring opinions, of injustice and bitterness.

"I know not, Lord," he said, "what they will bring against me down below in that valley which is to be as the vale of humiliation to me. I know not, but Thou knowest, and wilt take care of Thy Word. Yea, when I am passed hence, where the soul of our brother has passed since sunrise, Thy Word shall remain. Methinks I hear the labourer in days unborn as he climbs these hills singing to himself the sweet songs of the Prophets, and the child babbling with its earliest words the story of the Cross. Into every home, hut or palace, give Thy Word entrance, Lord, and in the English tongue let it be read and loved. And if to my weak hand is given the power to bring out this jewel from the mine where it has

lain hidden for ages, to Thee be the glory! And now for the descent into the valley from these heights, which are verily as Pisgah."

He drew his beloved Book from his deep wallet, and walked with resolute step towards the gates which opened on the steep hillside.

An infirm old brother kept this gate, which was not often opened. He came hobbling out with the big keys to let William Tyndale pass.

"Thrice to-day already," he muttered. "Why can't ye take the upper road?"

"This is shorter for the foot-traveller, good Brother. I shall be in Gloucester before yon train, or at least not far behind it."

"Aye, aye, all men for themselves—that's the rule—that's the rule. There be two brothers, Thomas and Anselm, not far ahead of thee, Father. They are lying in ambush up in yonder copse, like a couple of foxes in a hole."

Tyndale laughed.

"Nathless I am the hare. Well, I am bound for Gloucester, and that they will soon be persuaded of. That's a bad cough," he added kindly. "There's a good posset easy to mix, of the leaves of the white nettle, a snack of dried lavender, and honey."

"Eh, eh, I'm gone past possets—it is age and chills. I'm following hard on Brother Edwyn."

"Hold thou to the Cross of Christ," said Tyndale. "Be not afraid."

"Aye, aye. I say my Paternosters and I keep the hours, and I've laid up a trifle for mass for my poor soul—that'll serve. And I tell you kindly, Father Tyndale, this is not the place for heretics—have a care."

And so mumbling and coughing the poor old man retreated.

CHAPTER V.

TO JUDGMENT.

THE spies kept William Tyndale's figure well in sight as he crossed the open country lying between Upton-St.-Leonards and the city of Gloucester.* When they saw him close upon the East Gate they doubled, and entered at the South Gate.

The city was in a commotion, and there was a goodly crowd collected by the Cross which stood at the point where the four streets branched off at right angles to the town gates.

William Tyndale lingered here purposely, wishing to know what the people were discussing. The Chancellor's procession had just passed towards the Cathedral and Abbot's Palace, and some of the Grey and Black Friars came out from their convent at the South Gate to watch it, and listen to the reason assigned for the Chancellor's visitation.

"He comes to look into the matters touching one Tyndale, I hear," said one.

"Ay, and time too—a ranting, raving fellow, cutting himself out after the pattern of Martin Luther, who, but for the clemency of his Holiness, would have been roasted like a stubborn pig long ago."

"Will Tyndale is not after the German's fashion," said a young pale-faced man who was near. "He has no railing ways; and when my sister's son lay sick at

* William Tyndale was summoned to appear before the Ordinary in the spring of the year 1523, but the place is not determined with any certainty. The Abbot's Hall in the Gloucester Monastery—now preserved in the palace of the Bishop—has been chosen as the scene of the trial, simply on the ground of probability, though with no pretence of certainty.

Cambridge of a fearsome pestilence, Will Tyndale was the only soul who cared whether he lived or died. He nursed him with his own hands, and pulled him through."

"Pulled him down to hell most like with his heresy," said a snarling voice. "What profit to kill the soul, though the body be saved?"

"Good people," said a clear, musical voice, "you speak of a man who is present among you. I am William Tyndale, nor am I ashamed of my name. It is true, as you say, I am summoned hither to answer charges before the Chancellor; but yon babe in his mother's arms knows as well what these charges are. See now," and holding out his hands, he took a little rosy boy from his mother's arms, saying—"There was One who said that we must all be as a little child if we would enter into the kingdom. I take it not one of you but hopes to enter in there, and you would fain know the road thitherward. As this little one is content to be borne by his mother whither she will, nor questions not, nor pines, so must we be content to be borne by the will of the Lord and not our own. He has set this forth in His Holy Gospels, which, ere I lie down to die, I purpose to give every one of you in his own tongue. Mind you not, brethren, how at the day of Pentecost the tongues were all such as could be understood, each man for himself. What if I speak to the babe in the Greek tongue I love well?—what if I tell him I have for him a thousand gold pieces?—he understandeth me not. So I say that your treasure in heaven must be held forth to you in words you can comprehend. Brethren, I go to be arraigned before many great and learned men down yonder, but I fear not. If my work is of God, no man can stop it—and '*time trieth.*'"

Instead of resisting or showing dissatisfaction at his position in Tyndale's arms, the child stroked his beard softly, and seemed pleased at his exalted position above the heads of his mother and many others in the crowd.

As Tyndale returned the boy to his mother, he blessed him, and said—

“When he be grown to manhood, perchance he may read his Testament in his own tongue; if it be so, mind him that William Tyndale held him in his arms one April day, in the year of grace 1523.”

After this Tyndale pursued his way down the West Gate, and turning to the right, passed under Alwin's Gate, where tradition says the body of the murdered Edward II. lay while the good monks of the Gloucester Monastery were arranging for its admission into the church for a burial worthy of a king.

There is no time or season when cathedrals look more beautiful than in the light of a spring afternoon. As Tyndale passed into the nave under the great west door, floods of sunshine were pouring in at the windows. Like scattered jewels, the coloured lights lay upon the floor, illuminating here and there the huge girth of the Norman pillars, relieving their sombre massiveness with ever-changing beauty. The Early English tracery which hangs like a veil over the old Norman work of the choir has an especial charm in the elegant pierced work of the south transept.

As William Tyndale knelt on his entrance midway up the south aisle, there rose before him a vision of beauty which might well bring to his mind the words of St. John —“The strete of the cite was pure golde, as though shy-nynge glasse.” For the spandrils of the arches were illuminated with many colours, and beyond the dark-oaken door to the crypt entrance, was a flight of stone

steps leading on to the side chapels behind the choir; gold and shadow alternating and stretching far away indefinitely, while the floor, which was coloured a pale daffodil, seemed to be leading to the very gate of paradise.

William Tyndale knelt long absorbed in prayer while the priests were officiating at the chapels, and the service in the choir came borne like the sound of many waters on the ear. He was, I need hardly say, still a devout member of the Church, and as one by one the gross abuses which had grown on her, like hideous fungi on a stately tree, struck him with their enormity, so did his heart long more to see her free, and purged by the knife, if needs must, from corruption.

But through all, he, and many of like mind, loved her, and their love quickened their zeal, and intensified their efforts, for her Re-formation. To Reform is not to destroy, and none held this distinction more clearly than the learned scholar who devoted the best energies of his life to the translation from the Greek of the Holy Scriptures for the people of England, which should make them wise unto salvation.

William Tyndale had friends amongst the Brothers of the Gloucester Monastery, particularly amongst those employed in the scriptorium; thither he now bent his steps, anxious to tell them of the death of Brother Edwyn.

As he opened the heavy oak-door, which shuts off the cloisters from the nave, a strong current of cold air made him think how poor Brother Edwyn had probably met his death by working in such an atmosphere. The cloisters of Gloucester Cathedral, with their fan-traced roof and graceful proportions, are without a rival. On an April afternoon like this, the sunshine lies across the

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floor in golden bands, and touches the carved capitals of the pillars with living beauty.

A brilliant light fell upon the empty niche where Brother Edwyn had sat and toiled. The work of transcription with the pen was becoming less and less, now that book printing in black letter type was not uncommon. But the missal, with an illuminated margin, was yet much in request, and the Psalter and Gospels were also often ordered by wealthy men from the monastery scriptorium.

William Tyndale found but one brother at his post; he occupied the next niche to the one left vacant by Brother Edwyn. He was an old man, with a deeply furrowed face, and a skin like parchment. For many years he had plied the pen and brush on that very seat, and for him anything beyond these monastery walls was *nil*. As William Tyndale greeted him he looked up, and rising, bowed and bent the knee in token of respect to a fully ordained priest.

"How long is it," Tyndale asked, "since Brother Edwyn sat there?"

"He was carried up to Prinknash the day after Mothering Sunday; yes, the Monday of Mid-Lent."

"He will never return," Tyndale said. "His spirit departed in peace at sunrise this morning. I had craved a night's lodging at Prinknash, and was with him at the close."

"May the blessed saints receive his soul," breathed forth the monk.

"Say rather, may the Lord Jesus receive it," replied Tyndale.

"Ay dear, ay dear, he has left his work unfinished;" and opening a heavy oak chest, which was fixed between his niche and the seat, he said: "Here is the Gospel of

St. John; he paused here, interrupted by his fearful cough. See the flowers on the margin, the pink-edged daisies in which none but he could find beauty! See the doves in the nest, and the blessed crucifix!"

"He spoke of these when he was dying," Tyndale said, and taking up a slip of parchment, he read on it, "Kyrie Eleison, Christe Eleison. Nunc dimittis in pacem."

"These were the last words written, methinks; I would fain keep them," said the old man, taking the parchment from Tyndale's hand, with trembling fingers. "Brother Edwyn was kind to me. Many a time has he helped me through with an initial letter when I was puzzled. And now it's all over, and he is gone. One by one they go, and I shall be the next."

Then lowering his voice, he drew nearer to Tyndale, and said:—"He spoke of many things to me which were in his soul—heresy they call it. And I hear whispers that you, good Father, are to be summoned yonder for preaching strange doctrines."

"It is true," William Tyndale said, "that I am cited to appear before the Chancellor to-morrow at noon; but so be it. It concerns me not. Do thou hold to the cross of Christ, good Brother, and know that in His blood is forgiveness of sins."

Then he examined more closely the beautiful page adorned by many devices, traced by the hand now cold in death, and several other monks came up and listened to the story of Brother Edwyn's last hours.

"Lodging is granted you in the Monastery, Father Tyndale," said a voice near. Turning, Tyndale saw one of the two monks who had dodged him on his way to Gloucester.

"Then the stag will betake himself to cover," he said

significantly, "and see that he is brought to bay when the hunters want him."

A gleam of humour played on Tyndale's face, but a dark sinister frown met it from the Brother.

"Let the stag see to it that he gets clear of the next leap, for nathless a chasm yawns below."

"Perchance he may find a bridge to span it," was the quiet response, as Tyndale moved down the scriptorium to the cloister door leading to the western wing of the Monastery, now part of the Deanery.

The Abbot's Hall was filled with a goodly company the next morning. There was the Abbot in his chair of state supported by the Priors and Dean. There was the Chancellor in his robes, and many learned dignitaries and prelates. That Hall is full of historic memories of early Norman times. Here William the Conqueror was often the guest of the Abbot, when abroad on his great hunting expeditions. Here the boy king, Henry III., received the oath of fealty. Here Edward the Third and Philippa were entertained right royally when they came to Gloucester to inaugurate the shrine of the martyr king, Edward's father, who had been brought from Berkeley for burial in the choir of the cathedral.

The old Abbot's Hall has rung with boisterous mirth, and the goblets of wine have been quaffed there by king and noble; merry jest and song have echoed there, and the board has groaned under its weight of good cheer. But all was subdued and quiet when the time came for citing William Tyndale to appear to answer certain charges brought against him. These charges, however, had broken down. An attempt was made to bring against him accusations as to his life and conversation, but no witnesses could be found.

Brother Anthony it was true made a lame attempt to

prove that his conduct was odious in the sight of Sir John and Dame Marjory Walsh, but no one could be found to support his allegation.

At last, it was agreed to adjourn the Court, after summoning William Tyndale before the Chancellor to be reprimanded and warned, and sworn to appear in another place when ordered to do so.

As Tyndale moved up the Hall between the closely packed lines of his judge and accusers, he looked round on them with a quiet smile. In no wise intimidated or anxious, like some of old he was not careful to answer the Chancellor in this matter. The God whom he served would deliver him.

With slow and measured tread he walked up to the table, where in our own time one has sat who has been also foremost in the ranks of scholarship which he has, like his great predecessor, used nobly in the service of the Church and the world. Thus, after the lapse of more than three centuries, the unseen chain of sympathy and unity of purpose has linked together the first Translator of the New Testament from the Greek, and the last Reviser of that same text, to whom we in this day owe so much—in the old Hall where both alike have raised their voices for the truth.

“This is no formal trial,” the Chancellor said. “We reserve our right to search out every detail of your infamous doctrine, and your insolent preaching thereof, to another place and time. But I have called you hither in the face of all my learned brothers,—in the name of His Holiness the Pope, of His Eminence the Cardinal Wolsey, and of His Sovereign Majesty the King, to listen to my admonition, and to pray you in all fatherly tenderness to take heed. Before I proceed, have you aught to say?”

“Nay, my good lord, I have nought to say which can alter your purpose. It ill beseemeth me, a poor priest, to set myself up against such nobleness, religion, and learning. I have nought to say; for you bring against me no charge of bad living, or immoral practice, or dishonest dealing: thus, my reverend and noble lords, I had best hold my peace.”

“We do not desire otherwise,” said the Chancellor; “but in the name of His Eminence the Cardinal, who acteth for His Holiness the Pope, and in the Name of God, I admonish you.”

“Methinks,” said Tyndale, “I would place the latter Name, as above every name, first, not last.”

“Hold!” roared out the Chancellor. “If thou shouldst try insolence here, it will be the worse for thee. Have I not complaints from all the loyal and wise sons of Mother Church in your country round about Chipping Sodbury? The worthy knight who has received you into his house commands respect, and it is on his account rather than yours we reckon not up the full score against you at this time. We command you to appear before our Court at a future time, to make full amend by humble confession, of your present contumacy; and we counsel you to spend the time in penance, and humility, and contrition. I enter not into separate charges, because—”

“Methinks,” said Tyndale, “because you cannot. But, my lord, hear me, I pray you, on the sole charge which any man presses against me, though well I know that my God might well press against me others, save that I know also that the blood spilt on the cross hath assoiled me therefrom. But of the charge that I do study the Greek language, to which end I frequented the halls of learning at Oxford and Cambridge, I say, yea, I do study it, and that I find therein the joyaunce of him who falleth upon

hid treasure. For, my lord, in this tongue was writ the Word of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, which truth none here will gainsay."

"The Holy Church hath writ it in the Latin tongue," exclaimed a Prior seated on the left of the Abbot.

William Tyndale turned on the speaker a look of withering scorn, but quickly recovering himself, he continued,—

"I speak not to the ignorant, but to you, my Lord Chancellor, whose learning none can gainsay; and I say to you freely that by careful study of the Greek text and the rendering into Latin, and invoking of the Spirit of God, I have made some way through many difficult and rough places to the rendering the whole into the tongue spoken by every one of us who are natives of this realm. And, by God's grace, that Book shall one day be printed, as books can now be printed, by hundreds, aye, by thousands, and be read by those who are now, by reason of the diversity of language, ignorant thereof. This will I do, neither more nor less; and keeping to this one point, I heed not if blind leaders of the blind rate and abuse me. Yea, I say, I will continue my work. So may God help me!"

This plain unvarnished statement, made in the simple beauty of his lofty courage, had its effect. Silence fell on the assembly for a short space, and there were hearts present which beat in sympathy with the man who stood before them. At last the Chancellor broke the silence, ashamed at appearing in the least impressed or convinced by the words of this rebellious priest. He indulged in a long tirade of not too refined invective, and, as Tyndale himself expresses it, "rated him like a dog:" heaped abuse on him, threatened him, and finally dismissed him with orders to depart from Gloucester at once, and on pain of imprisonment to appear a second time before him, when the charges had been more fully set forth,

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and then, with something very like Anathema, bid him begone.

William Tyndale bowed, and walked with dignity out of the Hall, preceded by two monks, who were to conduct him to the East Gate, and see him clear of the city.

Turning at the gate and looking back, he said:—

“Fair citie as thou art, Glevum, well named, as the sun shineth on the lofty tower of the Mother Church and lighteth up the Abbey turrets, and burnishes the roofs of Lanthony with gold, so, as I take leave of thee, I say, may the Light that shineth in the darkness shine in the hearts of those before whom I have stood this day: and they will see with clearer vision when the scales shall fall from their eyes.”

These were Tyndale’s words as he raised his hand in blessing, and took his way through the budding hedge-rows, where the starry primroses looked up at him with eyes of love.

“And now, dismissing these matters,” he said, “I will go to the considering of Erasmus’ ‘Enchiridion.’ A few hours at Berkeley to-morrow will help me to the finishing thereof, and I will present it to Dame Marjory as a peace offering for my prolonged absence, and my outspoken zeal a night or two ago.”

CHAPTER VI.

DEPARTURE.

“AND who comes here?” was Dame Marjory Walsh’s exclamation, two days after John Huchyns’ visit.

“An empty pillion led by a serving man,” said Cicely, rushing headlong to the porch. “The man wears John Huchyns-Tyndale’s badge.” In another minute she had

taken a note from his hand written on a bit of thick rough paper, tied round with a wisp of silk and sealed: a cumbrous letter to contain but a few words.

"We are sending a trusty messenger and a sure-footed steed to convey hither Mistress Joan Walsh, as your ladyship granted leave for her to come up the hillside for air and refreshing—accompanied, we trust, by Mistress Karina Mountjoy. We will hold both maidens in safe keeping, and pray God to restore them to you in sound health. With our respectful greetings, your ladyship's servants to command,

"KATHERINE HUCHYNS-TYNDALE.

"JOHN HUCHYNS-TYNDALE."

It took Dame Marjory some time to read these lines—her scholarship was beneath that of her daughter Joan. But at last she spelled out their meaning, while the old brown horse stood patiently flecking the flies off his flank with his tail, and occasionally changing the right foot for the left, as he rested first on one leg, then on the other.

"What is it, mother?" said Cicely. "Here cometh Karina, she will read the letter."

Karina's colour was bright and her eyes flashing.

"I come to seek you, Cousin Marjory. There is no peace in the study, with the base mean worriting of Joan by Giles and Harry. They have hid her book, and smeared her cheek with ink, and fastened at her back a paper on which is writ 'boke-worm,' ill-spelt and ill-written. But Joan is weeping, and I prythee, Cousin Marjory, stop those boors from further mischief."

It was a word and a blow with Dame Marjory. She was off like an arrow from a bow, dropping the letter from her hand as she flew.

"Ye cravens, ye idle louts!" she said. "An your father returns from Stroud, ye shall catch the lash on your backs, grown men as ye are."

But Dame Marjory spoke to the wind—the boys were gone. Only Joan was left, sobbing bitterly, her head bowed on her folded arms. Her mother drew her close and caressed her.

"Sweetheart," she said, "art vexed with those boys? Cheer up, and say wilt thou not like to go to Inclyff with Karina to tarry awhile? The leech, doctor Walton, said yester e'en that the books must be shut, and that thou must turn child again, Joan."

"Oh, mother!" Joan sobbed, "it is the fretting for the learning that makes me ill—and the boys."

"The boys, forsooth! This comes of tutors being heretics and taking their own ways as it pleaseth them. They shall be sent packing, but whipped well first! Say Joan, sweetheart, wilt go and visit Mistress Katherine Huchyns, and come back with roses on thy pale cheeks. No books, nothing but frolic up there, and quiet, an you will have it."

Joan raised her head. "I will go if Karina goes with me," she whispered.

"See here, she is to go. Why, where is the letter?—I must have dropped it in my haste. Ay, you have picked it up, Karina. The child will go an you bear her company," and Dame Marjory stumbled through the few lines of the letter.

Meantime Karina and Cicely stood by.

"I would like well to go to Inclyff," said Cicely; "let me go, mother."

"A pretty notion! Thou canst scarce take care of thyself, much less of another."

"Let Karina come," Joan said, "or I tarry here. Mother, I must have Karina."

Karina had not spoken. She was thinking over the letter, and John Huchyns' words when he last saw her. Karina was well used to admiration—her beauty and her grace were such that they were known all over the countryside. But her woman's heart told her that John Huchyns meant more than the mere surface-like homage to a fair woman which was rendered her by every man she saw. Karina's memories of childhood and of her mother, and the rumours of the Court scandal now rife concerning the King's cold neglect of his Queen, did not tend to make marriage attractive in her eyes. Her heart was yet untouched, and she had rejected several suitors Sir John Walsh had deemed suitable.

Her whole soul was absorbed in the questions which William Tyndale's teaching and influence had awakened. Yet she was not unmindful of her daily duty, and of all she owed to her kind protector. As we have seen, she was active and blythe, not morbid and melancholy. The Gospels read to her by the tutor, and the Epistles of St. Paul, did not teach Karina to go moping about the world, nor to withdraw herself from it; rather to *serve* with cheerfulness for love's sake.

These principles, so familiar to us, were strange to the daughters of England in those times. Confession and absolution must follow sins; penance, imposed by the priest, would wipe out the offence. A certain number of masses a year, a certain number of prayers told out on a rosary, a narrow education, a prompt discouragement of thought and inquiry (which were not frequent), and all religious longings and aspirations met with the counsel to enter a convent and take the veil—such was the experience of the age!

Joan Walsh had had this advice from her priest, and she was now in weak health, with an excitable nervous

temperament, suffering from the perpetual warfare in her soul between old traditions and a faint glimmering of light, which she believed would shine brighter if she could only master the difficulties of learning.

As she leaned against her mother, that bright, active housewife and Lady Bountiful of the Village, the Bread-giver to the poor, the good wife and mistress, the pale wan face seemed to Karina to be unearthly in its expression. While she was hesitating with the letter in her hand, Joan was pleading:—

“I dare not go alone. If Karina comes, or you mother, I will go, but only for a few short days, mind that.”

“Karina,” said Dame Walsh sharply, “stand not there shilly-shally; speak, and let us hear your mind, and if you go I will run and gather together a few articles and garments in the leather bag, and as soon as the horse and man are rested you shall start to Inclyff. What art thinking of, Karina?”

“Let me go,” said Cicely; “I’ll warrant I’ll help Joan in the saddle, and I’ll give her Katherine Huchyns’ nauseous physick.”

“Ah! no, no, Cicely,” Joan said, shuddering; “I cannot go with you. Be not hurt, Cicely, but I——,I——”

“Yea I will go with thee, Joan,” Karina said: “and we will go primrosing, and look for the sweet smelling rushes which grow hard by Inclyff, and we will come back cheery and bright.”

“It is but ten of the clock,” Dame Marjory said. “The man and horse must be fed and rested, and we will hasten the dinner to the half-hour after eleven. This is easy to-day, as thy father is gone to Stroud concerning the new heifers. I’ll have some rooks on the spit and roasted to a turn, and now I must seek for the warm

homespun cloaks, and the velvet whimples, for the air is sharp, even though the sun is hot."

Dame Marjory hastened away, calling Cicely to follow, saying as she went:—

"But those two idle boys of mine must not be forgotten; they must be punished."

No sooner was the coast clear of Dame Marjory than a strange guttural sound was heard behind a bit of old arras which hung on one side of the study, concealing a cupboard, or deep recess, which was filled with a number of old deeds, and parchments, and ancient wearing apparel. Presently the arras began to shake, and was parted asunder in the middle to discover the two mischief-loving boys whom Karina, as well as Lady Walsh, believed to have escaped.

"Wherefore not call us out to be flogged, Joan?" Harry asked; "you knew we were handy."

"I would not have you whipped for my sake, Giles and Harry," their sister said. "I would not have been so mean as to tell where you were in hiding. I am going away, and you will perchance see me no more for a long, long time. I am silly to mind your frolic, but I am very weakly; be pitiful—be——"

"Methinks," said Karina, "this is a heaping of fiery coals on your heads, boys. Yes, Giles, thou may'st well look sheepish; lay the lesson to thy heart of rendering good for evil."

"Pooh," said Harry, "it's all frolic. Why, don't most folk pay fools to jest and make merry? Why can't we do it for kicks an we get no coin?"

"It seemeth that you do not get the kicks, which methinks you deserve. Worrit Cicely and me, and one another, but spare a child who is sick and burdened in soul."

"I see you are right, Karina," Giles said. "It is Harry who is always setting me on."

"Don't shift the blame on another back, Giles; forsooth thine is broad enow to bear it."

Giles was vexed at losing Karina's favour, and still more vexed that she was going to Inclyff. He knew by instinctive perception that John Huchyns loved Karina, and that he had not a chance when pitted against such a rival. Harry was gone to coax his mother into forgiveness, and Joan went feebly away, saying that she must look after her tame pigeons before she left Sodbury. Karina was following, when Giles blurted out—

"Don't part in anger with me, Karina."

"Anger! Nay, but be a good boy and mind your books, and be ready to go to Cambridge, not as a dunce but as a scholar. Think how most elder sons in your rank go to the seat of learning at fourteen and under, and here is your good father giving you one of the best scholars of the time to try and drive '*sum est*' into your pate, so that perchance you may be prepared for further studies. Be a wise boy, and—"

"I am near eighteen years of age," growled Giles; "I am no child, and I'd beat a hundred fellows at tennis and bowls, and I can set a hare with the best, and fence, and leap with the pole, and—"

This burst of eloquence made Karina laugh merrily.

"Verily, Giles, I like to hear you speak as a man"—and she was slipping away—but he caught her hand.

"Karina," he said, half choked with his emotion, "Karina, it is as if the sun had set when thou goest away."

"Suns rise again," she said merrily. "Fare you well, good Giles, and lead Hal, and be not led by him."

Not a word more could Giles get from Karina; and cloaked and hooded before one o'clock, she and Joan

were jogging along on John Huchyns' brown Meg toward Inclyff.

Giles watched the pillion out of sight with a heavy heart, and something very like tears in his blue eyes, while Cicely said:—

"I'd as lieve have gone; it's too bad, but I'd not have been so grieved for here, or so welcomed there, as Karina will be."

"No, verily," was Giles's answer, as he lounged back into the empty study, and opening a book hammered away at an easy line in Sallust. But the studious fit did not last long. He was soon beguiled by Harry to come and track an otter in the stream; and with poles and their two sharp-scented hounds, the brothers were starting for an afternoon's sport, forgetting for the time lady-love and books, threatened punishments, and parental indignation.

Sir John Walsh was returning from Stroud that evening, on his trusty horse, that had carried him many a mile o'er hill and dale. He was attended by two men, who bore in their saddle bags divers purchases which had been made by Lady Walsh's order, and was also well provided with rapiers and clubs. The roads across the Cotswolds were lonely, and robbers were known to lurk under cover of the woods, ready to pounce on the unguarded traveller. It was Sir John Walsh's boast that he had never been attacked, and that if travellers put a good face on it, and had proper attendants, there was no fear of robbers. Doubtless the worthy knight's confidence, being well supported by precaution, was a safeguard.

Sir John had heard in Stroud that day news of his chaplain and tutor, which disquieted him. He knew he was threatened and under suspicion of heresy; but he

was scarcely prepared to hear that he had really been arraigned before the Chancellor, and that his brave defence had excited the admiration of some, while it added bitterness to the hatred of others. Sir John thought of his wife and household, all devout members and children of the Holy Catholic Church. How could he retain in his service with impunity a priest not only suspected of heresy, but boldly proclaiming the same before his judges?

It became clear to Sir John's mind that he must part from William Tyndale, or expose himself and his children to suspicion, and perhaps involve them in consequences which he, brave and good knight as he was, shuddered to contemplate. And yet what was the bitter offence? It seemed to lie very much in the diligent study of the New Testament in the original tongue, and the determination to give it to the English people in the words they spoke every day. No kind of charge he had heard at Stroud was made against William Tyndale's life. Indeed how could it be so? Pure and blameless, dignified and self-restrained, yet sparkling at times with wit and humour, what more delightful companion could he find, and what more trusty guide for his children.

But the Church and her decrees could not be lightly set aside, and these were not days to risk the well-being of those dear to one's heart. An unscrupulous prelate was at the helm of the Church in this country, and it was said ruled both king and kingdom. If by his order, as recipient of the revenues of the diocese, the Chancellor acted as his representative in calling before him William Tyndale, the matter assumed a serious aspect.

Sir John was roused from his meditations by a loud halloo, and called to his men to halt. Descending a hill on the other side of the valley was seen a horseman,

who shouted at the pitch of his voice to know the way to Chipping Sodbury.

"Whither," asked Sir John of one of his servants,—
"whither does yon roaring bull want to go?"

"To Chipping Sodbury, your honour, as far as I can make out. He is coming helter skelter down hill towards us. He'll be breaking his neck on yon loose stones."

"Your servant, sir," said the traveller, when he drew up his horse sharply, just in time to prevent a collision with Sir John where the four roads met. "I seek the way to the mansion of one Sir John Walsh. Prythee direct me."

"And what may be your business with the knight aforesaid," asked Sir John, drawing himself erect in his saddle.

"Business! By the Cardinal's hat, I might say no business, unless I make business of a pleasure. But I want not to parley, for I have a hurt in my leg which giveth me sore twinges; so speak out, sir, and give me an answer to my query. I have a letter in my pouch, which commends me to the hospitable roof of Sir John Walsh for bed and board and good company. The good knight hath a repute for keeping the best of all such."

"Sir John Walsh is a plain man, sir," was the answer; "he has business to mind, which he is wont to put before pleasure, and the household at the Manor is a busy if a cheerful one. This road leadeth to Chipping Sodbury. I am bound thither, and you may bear me company an so it please you."

While he spoke, Sir John had been narrowly inspecting the traveller. In those days it behoved every one to exercise caution, neither were Sir John's men slack in their duty. They kept their horses well up to their

master's and the stranger's, and when he fumbled in his pouch for the letter of introduction, they kept a sharp look-out on him that he did not make this a pretence for unsheathing his rapier, or lifting a thick cudgel, the round bullet-shaped head of which was visible as it lay across the saddle bow.

Young gallants like this were known to be clever at relieving travellers of their purses, and other valuables, and a whistle like that at the stranger's girdle, had sometimes summoned accomplices lying in wait!

Sir John, however, after a close scrutiny, of which the object was wholly unconscious, said to himself: "A handsome, light-hearted boy, that has been about town, and having had his fill is tired, and seeking a change, comes into these parts; but what has he to do with me?" Then aloud he asked: "Are you of kin to the Walshes of Sodbury Manor?"

"Nay; but my father has an ancient friendship with Sir John, and as we town-bred folks crave for the country in spring time, he sent me hither to grow fat and wise. The curds and rennet in Dame Walsh's dairy is to do the first, and the learning of the chaplain and the tutor to do the last for me. I met the tutor in a way I had not bargained for. He picked me up after an ugly fall from my horse on the king's highway two nights ago, and took me to lodge at Prinknash, the summer palace of the holy abbot. Eh! I came upon great feasting there, for the Chancellor was on his way to Gloucester. The jolly old fellows know how to make merry. I was kindly treated enow, and my leg tended by the brothers who minister to the sick."

"Ah, you speak well of the Monastery."

"Ay, and so can I; but all the same, it makes a fellow laugh to hear Religious houses spoken of as abodes

of saints. Be that as it may, I saw one die the death of a saint," and Hubert Gilford crossed himself. "He died at dawn, and no less a person than Sir William Tyndale knelt at his side, to hear and assoil him." Hubert paused, and a shudder passed over him. "We will beguile the time with more cheerful talk than of dying. I have heard Sir John Walsh has fair daughters, and a Spanish kinswoman whose beauty turns the heads of all who look on her, young or old, rich or poor." Then, as Sir John was silent, he continued with a laugh: "Perchance your head has gone round with the rest."

"It is not our country fashion, sir," rejoined the worthy knight, "to jest lightly about fair ladies. Sir John Walsh hath two young daughters; one who is sick and weakly, the other like a briar rose washed in dew. His kinswoman is a lady of, as you say, exceeding beauty, and, mind you, exceeding wit and discretion."

"Too much of both for me, I warrant. I'll look after the Briar Rose, e'en if there be a few prickles in the way."

And now they had come in sight of Sodbury Manor. It was built on a slope of the Cotswolds, and its fantastic gables and twisted chimneys were glowing in the sunset light. The old parish church is now swept away, but as Sir John rode through the village the bell was ringing for vespers, and the two noble yew-trees, still remaining, stood up as sentinels, their topmost branches tinged with the glow which lay over the country-side. Fair indeed was the view of the Severn valley, with its rich green pasturage and thickly-wooded knolls—the noble river itself seen with the smile of the sunset sky reflected on its breast.

Hubert Gilford's eyes were not quick to discern what was lovely in nature, and Sir John waited in vain for a

word expressive of admiration, as he reined in his horse at the lower gate of the park, and said—

“Yon is Sodbury Manor.”

“Then methinks we part,” Hubert Gilford began; but one of the men alighted, and opening the gate, held it for the others to pass.

“Sir John Walsh, as I live,” said Hubert, not in the least abashed. “I am the son of your old friend Sir Harry Gilford, who entrusted me with a letter for you, which letter I have been fumbling for in vain. Ay, here it is.”

Sir John received the much crumpled and ill-used letter from the young man’s hand, and said gravely—

“A son of Sir Harry Gilford’s must needs be welcome, as I trust was proven some months ago.”

“Yes; my eldest brother, who hath ever, my father saith, an old head on young shoulders, did not fail to tell of your liberality when on his way from Bristol, where he had merchant’s business on hand. For me, I’ve none business, but mere pleasure, as I said.”

“I bid you welcome to Sodbury Manor,” said Sir John stiffly, “and it will not be my fault if you depart with a less good notion of our house than did your worthy brother. Here are my two boys.”

Giles and Harry ran to take the horses’ bridles, and as soon as Sir John had dismounted, Harry threw himself into the saddle to take it to the stables. The two attendants were so heavily weighted with purchases made at Stroud for the household and the farm, that their movements were less speedy than their master’s; while Hubert Gilford descended with difficulty—his leg was still stiff and painful—and when he tried to walk up the steps to the large stone porch, he would have fallen had not Giles caught him. A long string of mut-

tered imprecations followed, and Sir John called to him not to concern himself as to his goods and chattels, as all would be carried to the guest-chamber.

"Let it be the chamber on the first storey," he said to a woman servant who now appeared in a close-fitting kirtle of coarse homespun, and wearing a cap, with a peak, tied closely down under the chin, which disguised the fairest face, and made the good woman, who was at the head of Lady Walsh's maids, and ranked next in importance to her mistress, look very like "the witch" Hubert Gilford secretly called her. A thick cord girdled Tebita's very wide waist, and from this hung a number of heavy keys, which opened a variety of doors in the mansion of which she was custodian.

"Where are all the fair ladies of whom my brother spake? I'll wager this cannot be one. The dark-eyed Spanish maiden, even the chubby-faced daughter of the house would be an improvement on her. If Amyas has cheated me, so much the worse for him. Where is the old witch going to lead me, jangling those hateful keys like a jailer?"

While these thoughts passed through his mind, Hubert Gilford was limping behind the housekeeper, as we should now call her, down a long stone passage.

Sir John's voice was now heard calling for Dame Marjory, who came up with her light elastic step, and said—

"What now? I did not hear the horses' feet, and if you failed to sound the horn, how could I know that you had arrived? A guest, say you? Of what degree? Picked up on the highway, I'll warrant."

"Not so, Marjory. Peace, he is down yonder, guided by Tebita. He is the son of Sir Harry Gilford."

"Back again! More merchandise in Bristol! Nay, nay,

a mole might see farther than that. Well, a fool's errand, for Karina and Joan are gone."

"Gone, whither?"

"Did I not tell thee they were ridden to Inclyff to clear off some of the cobwebs spun in my poor child's brain? Ay, verily, John," Dame Marjory said, with the ring of maternal tenderness in her voice; "verily, John, my heart misgives me about our Joan. It all comes of William Tyndale, and——"

"Prythee Marjory, follow our guest. His leg has caught an ugly hurt, and some of thy salves or ointments may be needed." Dame Walsh was on the alert at once, and, eager to take a maimed limb in hand, was hurrying towards the guest-chamber. "Marjory," Sir John called, "it is not Amyas Gilford: it is his brother, a gay young gallant, this time. So thou art out of thy reckoning for once!"

But Sir John spoke to the empty air, for Dame Marjory was gone. Cicely was following, but her mother waved her back.

"Nay, go and see that supper is prepared; and, Cicely, look to the spiced drink on the hob. There is a flagon full; save half for our guest, if he needs it."

The guest was not so well pleased to be sent to his chamber at once as might have been expected. Tebita had established him on a settle, and a maid was already kindling a wood fire on the open hearth.

"Master Hubert Gilford," Dame Marjory Walsh said.

"At your service," was Hubert's reply. "I speak to one of Sir John's daughters methinks."

This indirect compliment delighted Dame Marjory. Is there a woman in the nineteenth century who is not well pleased to be thought younger than she is? The ladies of the sixteenth were no exception to the rule.

"Daughter, forsooth! I am his wife, and I came to look after your hurt. Tebita, for shame! See that the arras is drawn closer. The air bloweth too keen from the alcove." Then she continued, "Your brother was a welcome guest, Master Hubert Gilford, and not less are you welcome to Sodbury Manor. But, I pray you, let me tend your wound. I am somewhat skilled in these matters."

"Nay, I have no wound; only a sprain, fair ladye; and being long in the saddle has somewhat stiffened the joint. But I would crave leave to make one at the family supper, which methinks must be served, as the sun has long gone down. I would shake off some of the dust of my travel and then join you, an so it please you. I have a hungry stomach, and this is not Friday."

Somewhat disappointed that her skill was not to be called into requisition, Dame Marjory Walsh could but comply with the traveller's request; and pouring water into a large wooden bowl, and providing him with a coarse cloth, she left him, returning in five minutes to escort him herself to the large hall, where Sir John and his sons and Cicely were already seated.

"But a small gathering to-night," Dame Marjory said. "It is rare indeed to see so few faces at our board; but my daughter Joan is sick, and is gone with our kinswoman Karina Mountjoy, to Inclyff, the home of the Huchyns-Tyndales; and our tutor, Sir William Tyndale, is also abroad."

"That I have good reason to know, fair ladye. He and I have vowed friendship at Prinknash. Since then he has been standing before the Chancellor at Gloucester charged with heresy, and——"

"Did I not tell you it would be so?" exclaimed Dame Marjory. "I knew it, and we shall all be arraigned.

I will have no more of him nor his books, nor his foreign tongues and nonsense. I give him his warning, if you don't, Sir John."

Dame Walsh's oration made less impression than Hubert Gilford expected. Sir John went quietly on with the roasted heron, stuffed with herbs of many flavours, as if he heard it not. Giles nudged Harry under the table, and said,—“No such good luck as to get rid of him;” while Cicely, opening wide her violet eyes, turned them full on their guest, and said in her blunt, outspoken way,—

“An we all know mother sets more store by the tutor than any of us.”

CHAPTER VII.

INCLYFF.

THE element of hospitality was too deeply seated in Katherine Huchyns' nature not to assert itself when the pillion, for which her brother had been anxiously watching, came in sight with the two guests, who were unbidden by her, it is true, but must nevertheless be made welcome. That tenderness which lies hidden under the crust of brusqueness of manner and narrowness of mind, in almost every woman, came to the surface when John Huchyns lifted from the pillion the pale exhausted girl, and putting her into his sister's arms, said,—

“Here is a sick lamb for thee to nourish, Katherine.”

“Poor little one, she is weary. Come near the fire in the kitchen. I light not one on the hearth by the hall till sundown. There! I will soon bring you a posset—that will cheer you bravely.”

Tired and worn with her ride, which was always at

a jog trot on all sure-footed horses like old Meg, Joan lay back in the settle, and quiet tears were chasing each other down her cheeks.

"Hoity toity, no tears here! We are not given to crying at Inclyff."

Karina now came in, her eyes bright, and her colour the most vivid rose, after her ride in the fresh spring air, which had chilled poor Joan.

"I will get her early to bed," Karina said, "and then she will be rested to-morrow."

"Yes, yes, but not too soon, or she will not sleep. Now look you!" Katherine exclaimed, returning with a mug she had taken from a maid-servant, "now drink this!"

But Joan shook her head.

This did not suit her hostess at all. She held the cup to Joan's lips and said,—

"Pinch her nose, and she must fain open her mouth."

"Nay, be not so rough with the child, Katherine."

It was John Huchyns who spoke. His sister, however, took no notice of him; and at Karina's whisper, "Be not treated like a babe, Joan, but take the cup," Joan, choking with sobs, obeyed. Thus the beginning of the visit to Inclyff looked anything but promising.

But after three good nights' rest with Karina at her side, Joan revived, and followed Katherine to the poultry yard, and fed the newly hatched broods with some interest. There were no books available at Inclyff, so she could not puzzle over them, and she contented herself with listening to Katherine's stories as she sat at her spinning wheel, or brought out her holiday work of many coloured worsteds, with which she was attempting to finish a piece of tapestry begun by her mother and planned by her father in commemoration of a great event in history.

The rude outline of the figures represented the printing press in Westminster set up by William Caxton, and showed the "Boke of Chesse," which lay open on the ground. The said Boke was of large proportions, and worked in by Katherine, who had made a sorry spectacle of the face of the king and queen who stood behind Caxton.

"John hath the Boke of Chesse, and another printed by Caxton," remarked Katherine one day; but as Joan's face flushed with eagerness, she added, "No books here—have I not given my word for it?"

"I have learned by heart many words from the Book of which our tutor reads," said Joan, "and, Mistress Katherine, he says the day is coming when I shall most like have a Bible of my own, and that it will come from his hand."

"Will Tyndale should take heed ere he talked in that strain to a child. It's just a sin, of which he should be assoiled before he says High Mass at Whitsun. See, Joan, what a brave crimson silk for the band across her Majesty's forehead. Aye, poor queen, hers was a sore trial. Both her innocent children murdered, and she turned out of house and home!"

Katherine thus tried to divert Joan's thoughts into another direction, but the tapestry fell on her knees as she sat by her side, and the far-away wistful look came into her eyes.

"It must be good," she said, "to have the words of the Gospels always ready to read. Hast thou heard any of them in the English tongue, Mistress Katherine?"

"Not I; not I. They were writ in the Latin, and the priests and the great prelates can read it and interpret it to us womenfolk and unlearned ones. That's enow for me."

"But, Mistress Katherine, the Holy Gospels were not writ in the Latin tongue. They have been put into the

Latin from the Greek, and now our tutor will write them from the Greek into English; and the Psalter from the Hebrew."

"Greek and Hebrew, Hebrew and Greek!—to hear a chit like thee prating thereof. Come, I will put the work into the oak chest again, and send thee to the buttery, where Avice makes the crisp cakes. Then come to me in the dairy for a draught of new milk; they be back from the milking by now, unless they be fallen asleep on the milking-stools, which is as like as not. Now run!"

"Aye, I wish the child could run," continued Katherine, as Joan went to the buttery to seek Avice. "How she drags her feet one after t'other!" Then tucking up her upper skirt, which was open in front, and tying on a large loose garment which completely protected her dress, she went out to inspect the pails of frothy milk they were bringing in, and to see the pans were all filled for the butter-making, and the prescribed quantity set aside for household use.

On her way, she caught sight of two figures ascending a gentle slope which led up from the side of the house to a rude hut, covered with fir cones, from which there was a view of the country. Her eyes flashed, and then a bitter smile curled her lips.

"Poor fool!" she said; "poor John Huchyns, to take up with a foreign girl like you! As if she didn't look down on us. She walks forsooth as if she were Queen Katherine herself! John will never set her up in Inclyff over my head. Nay, nay, I'd as lief he took the little Joan, if it weren't that she is a bit wrong in her head. And my lady yonder is touched with heresy! I have no patience with this new-fangled nonsense; it makes me sick—but I'll keep free of it, I warrant, and shake it

out of that poor puling child's brain. It's nought but the megrims with her. As to t'other proud minx, she may take herself off to Spain or France as soon as may be. We want no upstart foreigners here."

As Katherine Huchyns thus talked to herself, the two persons who had opened the flood-gates of her wrath had disappeared within the shelter of the hut on the crest of the green slope.

The fair landscape which lay stretched before them, seemed to speak peace, and the little hills righteousness. The subtle spell with which the beauty of Nature often wraps us in the days of her first awakening from her winter sleep, was upon Karina and John Huchyns alike.

In his heart it awoke a vague tender longing for home, where the beautiful girl by his side should be the undisputed queen of her little territory, where he would be her loyal and faithful protector and friend. He would give her all she wished; there should be no stint of the things for which she cared most: and then he would know she was safe—safe from the perils of the times, and safe from being in any way compromised by the opinions he knew she held, and in which, if she liked to abide, he would not disturb her. Surely such love as his would win back love at last.

Karina too had her dreams, as, seated on a rude bench, she looked out on the wide valley. But her dreams went far beyond those encircling hills—far, far beyond the shining water of the Severn's mouth, far beyond the distant mountainous outline of the South Wales coast. If William Tyndale held to his determination and left Sodbury, she must follow. She hardly asked herself how, but she felt as if by some means the way would soon open.

Her spirit was an ambitious one, and though she

loved her kinsfolk at Sodbury Manor, she could not look contentedly at a long life there. Life! in one ordinary routine, broken by large gatherings at the table of those who were mostly dull when they arrived, and before they left were stupid with too much indulgence in Dame Marjory's good things! Of course there were exceptions, and some keen shafts levelled against the heretics would enliven the society at Sodbury. Since William Tyndale had been there, these shafts had often a poisoned tip which irritated her sorely, and wounded her, perhaps, more than the man for whom they were sharpened. Then there were the flatteries and high-flown compliments of some who frequented the Manor, and there were spasms of love-making, which awoke no feeling in her heart but disgust.

The eldest son of Sir Harry Gilford had talked much to her of London and the great world, which was so full of interest and excitement. He had told her of the Queen's sadness: and Karina was fired with the desire to return to her, if she could only find the way. The Queen's hatred of heresy was well known, and here was the difficulty. For every day the seed sown in Karina's heart by William Tyndale's hand was growing and strengthening, and she could not hide it always.

If only those happy mornings in the study at Sodbury were to last: if only she could hear more of that Book, wherein lay the treasures which came with all the brightness and freshness of novelty to her and many others, who for the first time saw the jewels of the Word shine before them—jewels and pearls of great price, to which *our* eyes have become so well accustomed that we fail to appreciate their brilliancy and beauty till, perhaps, some dark cloud overshadowing us, we see them as they looked to Karina Mountjoy.

These meditations of hers were broken by a deep sigh from her companion, her name following.

"Mistress Mountjoy! Karina!"

She started, for the tone was one of the deepest earnestness, and meeting John Huchyns' gaze she knew what was coming.

"You know well that I am a plain man, nor versed in pretty speeches. I must tell you straight out what is in my heart."

"Nay, Master Huchyns," Karina exclaimed. "Nay, do not proceed, I—I——"

"But I must proceed, Mistress Karina. My love for you is so great, so strong. Oh! I pray you turn not from me. I will give you all you wish. You shall be as my queen, and it will be but to command and I obey. Nay, Karina, do not scorn my love as mean and low."

"Master Huchyns," said Karina. "Far be it from me to scorn what is forsooth too high for me, and too noble, but I would not wed any man with a heart but half given to him. That would, methinks, render *me* ignoble and mean. My thoughts are not set on wedding any man."

"You think of the religious life then?" John Huchyns asked.

"Ah, no," was the sad reply. "If I were to hide myself within the Convent walls to-morrow, I should but chafe for freedom and for light—light which pierces not through those iron gratings, which illuminates not those cloisters. Ah, no; that religious life seems but as a will-o'-the-wisp athwart our meadows below the Manor. I chase not such a phantom: but I pine for freedom and knowledge, and to hear the words of the wise, and to refresh my soul at the very Fountain of Waters."

As she spake, her dark lustrous eyes were all aglow

with emotion, and John Huchyns looked at her as she spoke, despairing of success, but loving her yet more fervently than he had done before.

He took her hand in his, and she did not draw it away, but she repeated:—

“I cannot give you, Master Huchyns, a half heart in return for yours—no, nor scant measure for a great love; but I would fain be your friend. I am an orphan, and beholden to my worthy kinsman for the bread I eat and the garments I wear; but I yearn for a friend, and as such, if you speak not of love, I am well content to take you for.”

“Ah!” sighed John Huchyns, “and I must take the crumbs you are pleased to throw me, and like Wolf who will e’en pick a bone though he hunger for the meat.”

“Speak not so bitterly, I pray you; let us be friends, and, verily, I will ever believe in you as a friend, aye, and bid your wife welcome at the right time.”

“I shall never wed if I wed not thee,” said John Huchyns. “Many an one hath said this, I know, and wedded ere the year was out. But I am not made of stuff like that, as I may prove yet. And I may put one other question, and I have done: Is there the man living who has won thy love, Karina?”

“Nay, I love none other man,” she said; “and though I rule not by dreams nor omens, as Joan yonder, I have a presage that love which bringeth joy is not for me. I do not think my life will be a smooth one, nor one of bliss.”

“Ah! if thou couldst come to me, Karina,” John Huchyns pleaded. “Is it past hope?”

“I cannot come to thee, Master Huchyns, other than as thy true friend—let it suffice. Pain me not so sore by making me tell the truth again and again; let once suffice.”

"So be it," John Huchyns said with a pathetic dignity in tone and bearing. "So be it:" and kneeling, he bowed his head over the hand he held, pressed his lips on it, and left her.

Karina sat motionless, listening to his retreating footsteps. Her eyes were full of tears, and she was touched, as every good woman must be touched, by the confession of a true and noble love. But she knew well that pity and liking were not love; no, nor the warm admiration she felt for John Huchyns' character—so sincere, so truthful, so patient with his sister, so tender to poor Joan, and so full of appreciation of William Tyndale.

"I am alone and orphaned, and yet I dare not be his wife," she thought. "It is strange that my heart tells me it must not be."

"Karina!" It was Joan's voice. "The supper will be served anon. Why dost thou sit here? Mistress Huchyns is not well pleased thereat."

"And why should Mistress Huchyns spy out my movements? I am of an age to do my own behest. Dear little Joan, there is colour in thy face this evening."

"I sleep quieter sleep here, Karina. Not that I do not see visions still. I saw one last night of thee: I saw thee in a dark dismal place, and thy hair all dishevelled, and thy hands tied tight with cords; and then there was a wondrous flame and light, and there stood Master John Huchyns, gazing at thee with a sad face. Hush! there is Mistress Katherine calling Avice, and rating her: and she deserves it: she has upset a pail with all the milk from the red cow. Yet I am sorry for Avice, and I see not the good of rating and railing. Master Tyndale's Book says that love should suffer long. Oh, how I crave to hear him read again the Word."

"Aye," Karina said with a sigh, "I crave for it also; but we shall hear it no more, I fear me."

"Karina, how sad thou dost look this even! Has aught pained thee? Have I pained thee?"

"Nay, dear childe; it gives me joy to see thee smile, and the roses coming to thy face; but these are grave times, and I am thoughtful as to the future."

"Master John Huchyns is gone over the hill yonder, with Wolf at his heels. Mistress Katherine called aloud to him, but he heeded not, and supper is served. Wilt thou not come, Karina?"

Karina put her arm round Joan, and so they walked towards the house. Avice, sobbing in disgrace, was sent supperless to bed; and Miss Katherine Huchyns, still fuming and fretting under her loss of the pail of milk, was already at the head of the board, serving out a curious mixture of rennet and groats, with a hunch of brown bread to the men and maids.

A step ascending the flight of rough stone steps to the large entrance door made Mistress Huchyns turn her head. A pedlar stood there with his wares on his back, and with his hat in his hand bid the gentles good e'en, and would they please see his wares?

Katherine Huchyns had eyes for bright colours, and a kerchief of crimson and yellow, which the pedlar displayed as a token of what might be hidden in his pack, attracted her.

These pedlars, who carried their merchandise about in country districts, were a feature of the times. They collected news, too, as the itinerant Friars did, and they were generally welcome, and their faces well known in the neighbourhood they frequented. But this man was a stranger—a foreigner it seemed, and he spoke a broken *patois* of Spanish, Provençal, and English. His face was

not a familiar one to Mistress Huchyns, but she bid him seat himself till after supper on the bench by the door, and then she said she might look at some of his goods; she did not promise to buy, but she might take a look.

The pedlar seated himself as he was bid, first bowing with an air of foreign grace to the assembly. The maids and men all stared at him with country freedom of manners, and dipped their bread into the wooden bowls with a haste, which was partly the result of hunger, after a hard day's work, and partly the result of what we call in these days "shyness" in the presence of a stranger.

Presently Mistress Huchyns rose, and going towards the pedlar offered him a draught of rich milk from a huge beaker. He drank it eagerly, and then despatched a fine wheaten cake, like those which were set at the upper end of the table for herself and the two guests—Karina and Joan.

John Huchyns' ale jug and thick pasty were placed before his empty seat on the right of his sister. The pedlar's eyes were continually turning towards Karina. As I have said, none could mistake her for an English maiden. There was the light of the sun in the fire of her dark eyes, and the raven hair and rich warm colour on her cheeks all marked her as a daughter of the sunny South. Her mother's Spanish blood was seen in every graceful movement and turn of her stately head, on which the black lace mantilla would have seemed in its own place, and the long, heavy gold earrings, which hung from her beautifully chiselled ears, gave her the air of one to whom bright ornaments were familiar.

"It's ill luck, as I say, when the masters of houses are never to be had when wanted. Dost know whither Master John Huchyns has betaken himself, Mistress Karina?"

Dayspring.

The swift, rich blood mantled to Karina's face as she said,—

"Nay, Mistress Katherine; unless he be gone to look after the shepherd's boy, whose hand was bit by Sir Mark Purnell's bloodhound yestreen."

Katherine Huchyns laughed ironically:—

"Was he mixing a salve in the hut for an hour's space? Ah, well, there may be fool's errands over the hills as well as in the pleasaunce. An he will go supperless to bed like Avice, he must e'en do it. Make a clearance, Ruth and Jess, and be quick before the light fadeth."

The pedlar, who had been seated quietly all this time, now rose and said:—

"May I make bold, Senora, to show my wares? See," and he drew from his deep pack a string of beads, and a large fan, with two holes through which eyes could peep, and shine like stars—handing it to Karina. Then with a smile he began to speak in broken Spanish, and she responded; for up to twelve years old her mother had often spoken in her native Spanish tongue; and she had not forgotten it.

Mistress Katherine's almost childish love for "gew-gaws," as she styled them, quite drove away her indignation against her brother, and she began to push a hard bargain with the pedlar, which made him show his double row of ivory teeth, as if to intimate that he had found his match.

The end of the board nearest the door was spread with an unwonted array of kerchiefs, small and exquisitely chased spice boxes, beads, mantillas, crucifixes and rosaries, earrings and wrist rings, after the fashion of the bangles which now jingle on the hands of the maidens of our own day, and seem to delight them as babies are delighted with rattles.

"It's a brave show," Mistress Huchyns said. "How is it that you have never been in these parts before?"

"My way has not lain hitherward. I have been in other counties of England, amidst yon mountains," he said, pointing out towards the blue range which was standing up against the primrose-coloured sky of the fair spring evening. "I hear that in Gloucester—the great city in the plain—there has been a fine hubbub. They were bringing a priest to judgment, one called Tyndale."

"And what happened?" Joan asked; "what happened?"

"He is freed for this time. I bore him company for a short space." The pedlar looked round, and asked, "Are all good Catholics here?"

"What saith he, Karina?" Mistress Huchyns asked, for the pedlar spoke, as I said, a medley of languages, almost as varied as his wares.

"He asks if we are all good Catholics."

"Shame on him for his impertinence. Nay, we are no heretics; we have no liking to such cattle at Inclyff."

The pedlar looked hard at Mistress Huchyns, and seemed but imperfectly to understand her, but he caught the word heretic, and he busied himself with replacing his goods.

"A florin for this," he said, holding up a rosary. "Sweet wood, smell."

"A florin—nay, put it down at half a florin—that's enow for beads, sweet or sour! I'll turn over the others, and find a cheaper lot. This is a brave kerchief; I must e'en have it for Whitsun-tide, and these rings match well," Mistress Huchyns said, holding one to the rather red and coarse lobe of her ear, and trying to catch a good view of the effect in a plate of polished metal, which represented the hand mirror of those days.

"*Donna mia*," the pedlar said in a low tone to Karina. "The good Father Tyndale has spoken words to me which have struck deep. They are not altogether new words; I have heard the like before. Know'st thou one Juan de Valdès, of Cuença?"

"He is a kinsman of mine," Karina said.

"He is a wondrous youth. He was bold to say that the Church"—and the pedlar glanced furtively at Mistress Huchyns, who was too much engrossed with the earrings to heed him,—“the Church is in danger from foul practices, and it is said his twin brother, Alfonso de Valdès, secretary to the Emperor, is bold to denounce them also. I have told the Father of these two marvellous youths, and he replied, that he was right glad to know that they were doing the work of God, and that he is scouted and hunted and railed at here in these parts for the same work. He has bid me not forget to come to him at Sodbury Manor, and he will then continue the discourse which was so sweet to me.”

"Does he speak of our dear Sir William Tyndale, Karina?" Joan asked, in a frightened whisper.

But Karina silenced her by a look.

"He bids me, when I return to Spain, where I buy these wares, convey to the Senor Juan de Valdès his word of cheer, and tell him, saith he, that 'when he can give the Word of Life to the people in their own tongue, then will the light break forth.' 'It is marvellous that on all sides there is a stirring and moving,' quoth the Father, 'of the Spirit of God. In Spain, England, Germany, the pulse is throbbing, and——'"

"Did Father Tyndale name my name?" Karina asked.

"Nay, except that he knew a Senora who was of my country. As soon as I entered this porch, I divined that you were Spanish, Senora."

"I am English on my mother's side, but— --"

"Yes," broke in Katherine Huchyns; "my choice is made." And taking a leathern bag from a pouch at her girdle, she counted out some silver pieces. Sweeping up her kerchief, her beads, and her rings, she concluded her bargain, and was ready to wish the pedlar God-speed on his way.

"Antonio thanks you, and will revisit your hospitable roof anon," said the pedlar, with the grace that was natural to him. "Before I depart, let me leave a token with these fair maidens."

He presented Joan with one of the sweet-scented rosaries, and offered, kneeling on one knee, to Karina a long scarf of soft crimson and black satin, with a black lace edge, which he prayed her to wear in memory of Antonio.

"It is too much," Karina said; "too much to take as a gift."

"That cannot be. No gift could be too costly to offer thee, Senora."

Karina blushed. The pedlar was over bold; there seemed some mystery about him. Surely his foreign tongue was easily laid aside. He did not speak pure Spanish—only a word or two here and there.

He was yet kneeling at her feet, when with a great bound Wolf entered the hall. He eyed the stranger with no kindly glance; then drew back with a low growl and stood at bay.

Wolf was followed in another minute by his master, who with a word sent the dog "to heel," and then asked in a stern voice—"What meaneth this?"

"What meaneth it!" exclaimed Katherine Huchyns. "Hast never heard the proverb 'that the mice will play when the cat's away'? Sure, we may please ourselves

with brave attire, while yon supper stands on the board, waiting for him who should be here to eat it."

"Hast done thy business here, good man?" John Huchyns asked, taking no notice of his sister's satire; "the sun has all but gone down, and it is time for travellers to be under shelter. It is scarce safe to be on the King's highway in the evening with a pack at one's back."

"Right are you, most noble Senor;"—and Karina, standing with the rich scarf over her arm, where the pedlar had carelessly thrown it, fancied she saw a twinkle in his eyes;—"and poor pedlars like me have ere now been bid welcome under nobler roofs than this."

"You speak English well for a Spaniard," John Huchyns said, as the pedlar, having shouldered his pack, was departing. "See there, you are leaving a bit of finery behind," and John Huchyns picked up the scarf, which Karina had suffered to fall to the ground.

But the pedlar again bowed low, and said,—

"That finery is the dark-eyed Senora's;" and the next moment he was gone.

"He halts on one leg," Katherine Huchyns said. "Methinks it was ill grace to let him go thus."

"What countryman is he, Karina? Is he of thy mother-country, Spain?"

"I know not," Karina replied, musing. "He speaks many tongues, but that is common with pedlars, who see so many from divers countries. I wish you good-night, Mistress Katherine, and you also Master John Huchyns."

"Come, Joan, it is time thou wast on thy couch, and Karina has already gone. She has left this brave scarf, the good pedlar's gift," Mistress Katherine said. "Ah! it becomes me well: forsooth I'll keep it."

CHAPTER VIII.

RETURN.

THERE was silence at the Manor House, in the evening, when just at sunset William Tyndale walked slowly up the avenue to the door.

His heart was heavy within him. He had heard enough on his journey to and from Gloucester, to assure him that the time was come for him to leave the peaceful shelter of Sir John Walsh's roof. The completed translation of "Enchiridion" was in his wallet, with a dedication expressing dutiful affection and gratitude to Sir John Walsh and Dame Marjory. But he felt convinced that his remaining under their roof would bring them trouble, nor serve any good end to the cause he held dear. Had not the old Doctor of Divinity said to him,—

"I know as well as you do that the Pope is very Antichrist, whom the Scripture speaketh of. But beware what you say, for if you should be perceived to be of that opinion, it will cost you your life."

"To beware what I say, when the conviction of right is on me, is a fencing I cannot practise. I must speak out if needs be," had been his reply. "Then," said the old man, "go hence to London. There doubtless the learned Bishop Tonsall will hold out help to you as a scholar; get into his service, and then you will be able to follow your study and your work. Have you no one who can give you a lift in the great city, and keep you well before the eyes of the learned?"

"Aye, it may be so," William Tyndale replied, for he remembered that Sir Harry Gilford was holding a position in the king's household, and might be inclined to show him kindness for his son's sake.

"I shall find him here, doubtless," he thought, as he approached the side entrance of the Manor. "The gay restless youth may learn some good lessons here. But how quiet the place is! No boys! no Joan! no bouncing Cicely!"

"Sir William Tyndale!" Tebita exclaimed as she drew back the bolt of the door. "Aye, we are right glad to see your face once more amongst us."

"Thanks, good Tebita! But wherefore is the house so quiet?"

"The whole family—that is, the boys and Mistress Cicely—are gone with the Knight and his ladye to dine and sup at Sir Richard Lee's."

"And Mistress Mountjoy and the sick Joan?"

"They are abroad too, gone to Inclyff, and a right good thing 'tis. The poor child's megrims grew worse and worse. We've had a guest with a lame leg, one Master Hubert Gilford, brother to him who was here last fall. Mighty handsome and fair spoken, but he left at day-dawn this morning, intending to return before long. He said he had an errand at Bristol. They all took mightily to him—Sir John and Mistress Cicely. He asked me where we hid the Spanish beauty, and how far Inclyff lay from Sodbury; and he was that pretty in manner and talk, he'll have a welcome back, I warrant. And how has it sped with you, good Sir William Tyndale? This house is desolate without you."

And Tebita preceded the tutor to the study, which, facing north-east, was now dark and gloomy: no bright daffodils nodding from the stags' horns, no marsh marybuds in the pots on the hearth, no sweet rushes on the floor.

"Not a soul has been here since Mistress Karina departed," Tebita said. "But I'll kindle a log on the hearth, and bring you your food. What will you fancy?"

"A draught of milk and a wheaten cake will suffice, good Tebita," William Tyndale said, an involuntary shudder passing over him as he sat down in the dim light in the empty room.

Tebita hastened to kindle the fire, and, jingling her keys, went to the larder to fetch a better supper for Sir William than he had ordered.

She spread it before him with nicety and care, and talked, as was her wont: for Tebita held the place of trusted servant in the household, and was Dame Marjory's right hand.

"And how have you sped, Sir William, if I may be so bold as to ask?"

"Fairly well, good Tebita. I was rated like a dog before the Ordinary, and I think, with so much turmoil in these parts, I must soon be departing. But I shall bear you in mind in my prayers, and all your goodness to me."

"I would fain see anything I could do to keep you with us, Sir William. I have a nephew in the city of Bristol, who sayth that your words, delivered at Austin's Cross last Midsummer, did move him, so that he can get no rest till he sees you and hears you again. He is sub-sacristan in the church of St. Mary Redclyffe, and he lives hard by in the Street where Sebastian Cabot was bred. He has sent me a message by the mouth of James Wansey, the pedlar, and he craves to see and hear you again."

"Would he receive me, think you, to board for a few nights on my way to London?"

"Indeed he would, and no coin of the realm should pass betwixt you. I'll give you the word for that. James Wansey will be calling on his way back. I'll send word by him. I'm no scholar, and can but set my mark, and enow too. What do womenfolk want with learning? Let 'em leave it alone, and mind their household, say I."

William Tyndale leaned back and smiled his rare sweet smile on the good maidservant.

"Thou hast learned thy household work well, Tebita. I will write a letter for thee to send by thy friend the pedlar, and to it thou shalt set thy mark."

Tebita's plain face brightened.

"There then, I'll be proud as a pea-hen to mark your letter, Father Tyndale. My mark was set last month against the entry in the Register that old Christie Martin was shrouded in woollen.* That's a queer way of making the dead of service, and some of 'em have been of little enow in their life, I warrant."

"When will the pedlar call, think you, Tebita?"

"To-morrow or next day."

"I'll have the letter ready; give me your nephew's name; or, stay, dictate to me the words I must say."

And William Tyndale took a strip of thick vellum-like paper, with coarse markings and rough surface, from his wallet, and drawing towards him the large ink-horn, where all his pupils dipped their goose quills, he waited.

"Now then, Tebita."

But Tebita jingled her keys nervously with one hand, stroked her chin with the other, fidgetted, and stood first on the right leg, then on the left; and then her broad mouth relaxed into a grin, the perplexed lines on her forehead, as much as could be seen under the peaked linen cap smoothed out, and she burst out laughing:—

* To encourage the woollen manufacture of the West of England, an order in council was issued that the dead should be buried in woollen, under pain of a heavy fine if the order was neglected. In the old parish register of Stinchcombe there are many entries accredited by the mark of two witnesses that the body was buried in woollen.

“Faith, Master Tyndale, I can neither write nor speak in learned fashion. You write and I’ll mark.”

William Tyndale laughed as he said,—

“Verily, Tebita, your mark is your word; any way I must know the name of the man I address.”

“My sister’s son, Simon Bragge, from his kinswoman Tebita Collet greeting—and—and———”

But William Tyndale was already guiding the squeaking pen over the paper, and after five minutes’ pause, during which Tebita stood awe-struck as she watched what was to her the marvellous process of forming the characters, he read:—

“To Simon Bragge, my good nephew and kinsman.

“DEAR SIMON,—Ere many days are spent there will come to your door, in the Strete of Redclyffe, a poor priest, one William Tyndale. He has preached the Word of God so far as in him lies, at the Cross, situate on St. Austin’s Back in your citie. Receive him in love for his work’s sake, and advise the good kinsfolk anear you that he will, God willing, speak to them of the Holy Gospel of the Lord, on a Sunday in May, most like the Holy Festival of Pentecost.

“This is with greetings from your mother’s sister and your aunt.

“TEBITA COLLET, her mark.”

With what proud decision Tebita made her mark, I have no words to tell: how she put her head on one side, how her tongue followed the direction of her head, how her white coif flapped against the desk as she leaned over it, how, with an effort greater than that of any she made at the churn or in the buttery, she formed the two transverse lines.

“Verily, Tebita, thy mark ought to carry weight,” Tyndale said, as with a proud and satisfied air Tebita surveyed the heavy thick cross which now adorned the page of neat caligraphy. “It must be well sprinkled, or we shall see an ugly blot.” And he took some fine sand from a small wooden cup, and showered it over the manuscript plentifully. “There, take thy document, and tie it up with some brave-coloured silk ready for the pedlar, and now I must betake myself to bed. Say to the Knight and his ladye on their return, with my dutiful greeting, that I have gone early to rest, being aweary with my journey. Good-night, Tebita.”

Tebita was proudly gazing on her letter.

“I’ll be loth to part from it,” she said. “After all it must be a brave thing to read one’s own words.”

“Aye, verily, and a braver to read the words of Him into whose holy keeping I commend thee, Tebita.”

Tebita knelt and crossed herself, and then departed to put her treasure into a place of safety.

William Tyndale retired, to his room, a modest chamber over the study, and, as was his wont, knelt in prayer by the window. It was a dark cheerless evening, the wind sighed in the branches of the stately trees, and drops of moisture hung from the budding lilacs, and sprays of roses which climbed up the side of the Manor and fell in graceful untrained garlands from the window mullions, and met the ivy, which wreathed the twisted shafts of the chimneys.

It was late for any one to be astir, but the deep bay of the mastiff announced that the master of the Manor, his lady and children, were returning from Sir Richard Lee’s.

Lady Walsh was in a litter with Cicely, borne by two of the stout serving men. Tyndale heard her voice as

they drew near the courtyard, which his window overlooked.

"Nine of the clock! a pretty time for girls and boys to be afoot. Next time Sir Richard bids us to keep a feast for his boy's birthday, I hope——"

The rest of the sentence was lost. The two boys came up whistling, hallooing, and singing, and Sir John's sonorous voice was heard bringing up the rear on his trusty mare.

"Off with ye to bed, ye varlets; the last stoup of Rhenish wine was too much for your crazy pates."

Tebita's voice was now heard above the general clamour:—

"Yes, the maidens are all abed, save your ladyship's woman, and she is nodding fit to break her neck. Sir William Tyndale is come back, or faith, I'd not like to be left with nought but the two young serving lads, who sleep like dormice."

"Where is Sir William Tyndale?"

"In his chamber: he was aweary and needed rest: he bid me say so with his dutiful greeting."

Then there were some words from Sir John which Tyndale did not catch, and soon silence reigned.

Day was breaking the next morning, when William Tyndale was awoke by a low whistle in the courtyard, and looking out he saw in the dim light the figure of a man with a large-sized pack.

"The Bristol pedlar! but why come so early?"

"Is that you, good Father?" asked a voice he knew, "let me in. I am a guest here, but business has called me away for a day."

"Master Hubert Gilford's voice," Tyndale exclaimed: and hastily donning his black priestly gown he went down to the side entrance, and drawing back the bolts

admitted him. No sooner had he got within the threshold than he bowed his head, convulsed with laughter, signing to Tyndale to be quiet.

"Let me come to your room," he whispered, "there's Chanticleer rousing the men and maids, and they'll all be upon us, with grim-faced Tebita at their head."

Tyndale turned and walked with a dignified step to his room, Hubert Gilford following him, and dragging his burden after him.

When the door was shut he burst into a fit of laughing.

"Turned pedlar, you see, good Father Tyndale, and I have made a fine bargain with a rose-coloured scarf. Mine has been no fool's errand. I see how the wind blows, and I have seen the dark-eyed Senora, the fairest and most beautiful of maidens. Verily, Amyas was right, but I've stepped in to win her, and all by my ready wit. Keep my counsel, Sir William Tyndale, and let us see what she will say to me when she finds whence the finery comes."

"Your own wit seems to please you," said Tyndale; "but not being able to read your riddle I must needs be less amused thereby than yourself."

"Well, I will unfold my riddle. Look not so grim and grave: I have done no harm; nay, rather, I vow by the saints——"

"Make not such vows," Tyndale whispered, "nor profane ones."

"Well, I have resolved, then, to be a new man, leave freaks and follies behind, and seek to win this fair ladye, towards whom, in a mysterious fashion, I have been drawn. When you left me at Prinknash I felt the same eager craving to get here that I told you of. I arrived, and lo! the bird has flown. A rosy-cheeked, blooming damsel, named Cicely, seemed to like me well enow, but

it was not she I sought. I chanced to meet a foreign pedlar with a heap of gewgaws on the road, and I stuffed me a pack with his wares and with rubbish, and laid these atop, and betook my way to Inclyff——”

“With a lie in your mouth,” Tyndale said sternly.

“Nay, on my back, say rather: but it was a mere jest. I’ve played the mountebank before. I can speak a smattering of French, Italian, and Spanish, and I worked up a pretty story about those kinsmen of the Mistress Mountjoy, though I have never set foot in Spain, and I spoke of you, good Father, and——”

“Peace, I would hear no more: but it may be, added years may bring you added wisdom. Now it is nearly the hour for the early mass; leave me to prepare for it, and get you to your chamber, rising, may be, a wiser man.”

“Don’t betray me, good Father: it was a mere boyish freak. And let me have a fair chance with yon huge clumsy giant, who ordered me off his place, his eyes all green with jealousy.”

“Tut, tut, man; John Huchyns-Tyndale is not like to be jealous of thee!”

Hubert Gilford gave a great yawn, and disappeared, pack and all, complaining of the hurt to his leg, and saying that he should be abed till midday.

It was not till the tutor had with difficulty settled his troublesome scholars to their work that he sought an interview with Sir John and Dame Marjory Walsh. They were both awaiting him in the inner room leading from the large entrance hall, which answered to our drawing-room. People *withdrew* there with any guests who might be staying for the night, while the servants cleared the hall, and it was understood that this room was furnished more carefully than others.

Some fine old tapestry covered the walls; the wide

hearth was surmounted by a carved oaken chimney piece, the Walsh arms and quarterings on a shield in the centre. Above this was a stiff Flemish painting, considered of great value, of a Walsh who had won his spurs at the battle of Agincourt. His crossbow and halberd hung above. The benches were also of carved oak, and two wide and long seats, with scrolled ends, and cushions, stood on either side of the hearth. There was a cabinet, also of oak, with many shelves, where heirlooms were collected, some chased silver cups and a chain presented by Queen Katherine, Henry V.'s Queen, to the good soldier who had fought so valiantly on St. Crispin's Day: a day yet to be made still more memorable by the coming Genius, who has rehearsed its glory and its loss for us in his own matchless words.

There was something in the air of both tutor and patron which implied that the matter in hand was serious.

William Tyndale drew near Dame Marjory and presented her with the manuscript of Erasmus's "Enchiridion," which he had dedicated to Sir John and his lady in respectful and affectionate terms.

"I would accept this as a token of your kindness and regard, but I promise you not that I shall be convinced by reading of the same. Yestreen, at Sir Richard Lee's, we heard one doctor there who may dispend a hundred pounds, and another three hundred pounds; and were it reason, think you, that we should believe *you* before them?"

To this sort of logic Tyndale could make no reply. He only bowed low, and turning to Sir John, said:—

"The time is come for me to leave your house. Though rated like a dog by the Ordinary, I was let go and no harm done to me this time: but the storm may soon break, and I would not bring any discredit on your good lady or yourself."

"All these turmoils," said Sir John, "cannot be pleasant to us—the tutor of our boys should stand above suspicion of such heresies. So I must accept your decision, Sir William Tyndale, and ask whither you go, and when?"

"I scarcely know, your honour. But methinks the son of his Grace's Comptroller, now your guest——"

"Nay, he has left us," Dame Marjory exclaimed.

"He returned at daybreak," Tyndale said with a quiet smile, and continued,—

"Methought with a word of recommendation to Sir Harry Gilford from his son, and from you, Sir John, his friend, I might be helped by him to the household of my Lord the Bishop of London—eat a crust at his table, and pursue my studies in the heart of the great city, and it may be have the help of the scholarship of so good a man as Erasmus assureth me the Bishop of London is. I purpose to take Bristol first, and will depart thither early in next week, if so it please you."

"It pleaseth us not at all to lose you," exclaimed Dame Marjory, who was acute enough to value the services of the tutor in her household, and sensitive enough to be vexed to hear him so ill spoken of as at Sir Richard Lee's the day before. "Give up all thy schemes for putting forth the 'pearls before swine,'—those are the very words Sir Richard used anent the translation of the Holy Gospels. Give up these, and remain our very good friend and learned tutor and chaplain."

Tyndale turned to Dame Marjory as she spoke, and looked steadfastly at her. Little, ah, how little! did she dream that she was asking Tyndale to give up what was dearer to him than life itself. Dame Marjory looked upon this scheme as one of merely passing importance. *She* could not in her ignorance take a wider range than

present inconvenience to herself in the fierce tumult Sir William Tyndale's supposed heresy excited—a temporary tumult, she thought, which would pass as the others had passed.

“Only give up talking of your heretical opinions—only keep quiet,” Sir John urged. “I will do all you desire with Sir Harry Gilford; but, my good Father, if you take your opinions to London with you, what availeth your departure? We lose your faithful service, and what gain have you?”

“May it please your honour, my gain or loss weigheth not in the balance, but I am not as an adventurer on an unknown sea. I am not even as Sebastian Cabot, who put forth from these shores with no certain port in view. Over that trackless waste he hoped the land of his desire might be. But I have my chart all ready to hand—this is no trackless waste on which I set my frail bark. There is One with me whose voice I hear above the prattle of foolish men, which is as the fret of the water at the prow of the ship. I hear Him as He says that I must push onward, brave adverse tides and currents, brave storm and tempest, nor rest till I have gained the port, where by His Spirit's help, I am bound. The day when I have given the Word of Life to this people in our own wondrous tongue, spoken by the King on his throne and yon serving-man coming across your wide demesne leading the oxen from the plough—that day, I say, I shall gain my haven; and then I will lay down my oars and reef my sails, and say that I am glad, because I may have rest in the haven where I would be.”

While Tyndale spoke after this fashion, both his listeners were affected by his simple yet lofty courage, his determination to hold his aim ever in view, his conviction that he was on the side of right, his earnestness of pur-

pose. Although neither Sir John nor Dame Marjory had any notion of the great importance of William Tyndale's work, they felt, as we all feel when a man is thoroughly in earnest, a respect and sympathy for him which could not be expressed.

Unwonted tears dimmed Dame Marjory's eyes as she said,—

"Sure I am loth to lose you, William Tyndale, and I would fain keep you. I'll read this book you have handed me—it is writ clear and plain—and I will lay to heart all you say; but when as yestreen they are all clamouring against you and your doctrine—such wise and learned men, too—what is a poor woman to think? or how can she discern the way?"

"Aye, good Madam," said Tyndale, "the way is plain, made straight for those who will walk therein; but I thank you from my heart for all your goodness, and your name, coupled with Sir John's and that of my dear scholars, shall be always in my prayers before His altar, and in my own chamber and as I walk the streets."

"I'll send a message by private hand," Sir John said, "to Sir Harry Gilford. I know a good woollen merchant of Stroud who is setting forth after next market-day to London, and I will advise my old friend Sir Harry of your coming."

"That son of his abed upstairs—prythee dost thou know aught of him, Sir William Tyndale?" Dame Marjory broke in.

"I met him on the king's highway yesterday se'nnight—that same day that I left the Manor. He is a gay and frolicsome youth, of gifts and parts, with a tongue in his head and a power to use it. He needeth wisdom and ballast to steady him, which may come with age."

"He is comely enow to look at," said Dame Marjory

"and gracious enow. His brother Amyas was as sober as my Lord Chancellor, but not so winsome."

"Taken with the outward man, eh! Marjory? If the two brothers were put in the scales, I know which would weigh heaviest."

"Yes, doubtless. Master Amyas Gilford was like a nightmare with his solemnities—heavy enow. The first night Master Hubert arrived, he spoke up so well when I offered to bathe his leg, asking if I were Sir John's daughter!"

"Ah! ha, ha! we have it now—that was a pretty compliment, was it not, Cicely?" said her father, pinching the rosy cheek of his daughter, who came in with bright eyes and that all-pervading air of youth and health which gave her the charm which belongs to every young, fresh creature on whom the world smiles. "What did he say to the real daughter, this gay young stripling?"

"Master Hubert Gilford," said Cicely, "is in the hall, and dinner is served—and mother, there is another brood of turkeys. Do chide Hal—he is worriting about in the poultry-yard and doing much mischief."

"Methought he was doing his sums," said William Tyndale. "He must be tied to the bench by a stout cord. And is your verb learned, Mistress Cicely?"

Cicely tossed her head and replied, "Ask Giles, he has heard me con it over six times."

"What is the verb?" asked Hubert Gilford's voice, as he stood before the tapestry which hung over the rough oaken door dividing the room. "For sure the verb for the Briar Rose to con is *Amare*."

Sir John, whose pride in Cicely was unbounded, chucked her under the chin and said,—

"She must not go through the tenses yet—she must

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wait till she is as old as her mother was, when I put her through them. Eh, Cicely?"

And whither did you ride yesterday, Master Hubert?" asked Dame Marjory. "We missed you sorely, and you ought to have sat at Sir Richard Lee's board. There was good cheer, and good though somewhat stormy talk."

"I went to look after some game, fair ladye," Hubert said in his most courtly manner. "I crave pardon if you think me wanting in courtesy for not apprising you of the same."

"No, no; be at ease. Guests at the Manor have free exit at their will. Now to dinner—it is near noon."

CHAPTER IX.

TO THE MANOR AGAIN.

KARINA was not slow to discover that her presence at Inclyff was unwelcome to one member at least of the household. It seemed as if Mistress Katherine could not resist sending forth shafts of irony at her brother, a vent to the ill-temper which the certainty that he loved Karina caused. John Huchyns would bite his lip and strive to control himself, but it was not always easy. The hot blood would mount to his fine face as his sister levelled sarcasms against foreign manners and fine folks, against mandolines and dances, gewgaws and ornaments.

And yet who loved a bit of gaudy attire better than Mistress Katherine?—who led the country dance at the Harvest Home with greater spirit?—who loved better to hear the jingle of the heavy earrings with which she delighted to drag down her large ears? Ah! is it not always so? Are we not all prone to the weakness of being

hardest in our judgment when we see our own faults or weaknesses in others?

"Joan," Karina said, as they lay down to rest on the third night after the pedlar's visit, "would you fret much if I went home—back to the Manor, and left you here? I am not wanted here. I vex Mistress Huchyns, and I make—I make John Huchyns unhappy. Will you stay behind if I beg to be sent back to-morrow?"

"I cannot part from thee, Karina," Joan said. "I can only sleep in thy arms—I have no terrible visions then. Do not leave me, Karina."

"Well-a-day! we must both depart; but, Joan, I counsel thee to stay. Colour is come back to thy cheek, brightness to thy eye. Moreover, Mistress Katherine loves thee. Tarry here awhile. Think of thy boisterous brothers at the Manor—think of Cicely, who never has had ache or pain, and cannot understand thine. Is it not far quieter and more peaceful here at Inclyff?"

"I want to hear Sir William Tyndale again read the Word. O Karina, I hunger for it!—I thirst for it! Let us both go home. I will not study or vex my brain with those Greek letters. I only want to hear his voice again."

"I crave to hear it also Joan; but my heart misgives me that our time for hearing it is short. The pedlar spoke of his having been arraigned before the Chancellor—this will lead to his leaving us."

"That pedlar, Karina—dost remember how he knelt at thy feet? Karina, there was something strange in him. He spoke all tongues brokenly but English, and Ruth sayth she saw him shaking his pack with laughter as he limped away. Ruth sayth she thinks he was a spy, and that he has a plot to rob the house—a dreadful thought!"

Karina laughed. "Thou wilt listen to any idle story which feeds thy fears, Joan. Yon pedlar was not of the

robber sort. He was gentle and courteous in manner; and didst thou not hear how he spoke of our dear tutor?—and how he had heard of us from him?—and how he had awoke in him a desire to be more devout? And then he spoke of my kinsmen in Spain, and how he knew one of them, Juan, did there the work our tutor doth here. A robber!—I never heard the like!”

“Well,” Joan said, “many soft spoken folk are not trustworthy. Think of that priest who behaved so ill at Yate lately. He was the fairest spoken man. Father was deceived, for he used to sit at our board full often; and then the other day, when Giles spoke of him, our father thundered out he was a liar, and his name must never more be mentioned.”

“What has that to do with the pedlar?” Karina asked sleepily. “The pedlar pleased me and Mistress Katherine.”

“He did not please Master John Huchyns,” Joan murmured, “or he would not have sent him forth without the grace of a night’s lodging.”

“Ah! Joan, thou art but a child,” said Karina. “Well, we will both return to the Manor to-morrow.”

No opposition was made to Karina’s request as far as she was concerned, but Mistress Katherine declared that she could not give up Joan so soon without her mother’s order.

It was agreed that Joan should stay and sleep in a little truckle bed in a closet through Mistress Katherine’s room, and that just before Whitsun she should be brought back to the Manor.

Joan was submissive, but her eyes filled with tears; and when Karina actually mounted the pillion behind Master John Huchyns, her sobs shook her slight frame.

“Farewell, farewell, Karina,” the poor child sighed forth.

But Mistress Katherine Huchyns would not allow any sentiment.

"Tut, tut, child; it's a poor compliment to me to weep and wail like this. We will go up to the High Farm, and I'll warrant you'll soon forget every one, when you set eyes on the stock there—such a couple of white calves as you never saw at Sodbury, I'll answer for it."

"I hope the pedlar won't come and rob the house," Joan murmured, as she waved her last farewell to Karina.

"Pedlar! fiddlesticks! a nice-spoken man like that is no robber." And then Mistress Katherine turned to her household labours, and by way of blowing away her fancies set Joan to the churn, till her little thin, fair arms ached from the elbow to the finger-tips.

Meanwhile old Meg went at an even jog-trot through the bowery lanes and emerald hedgerows. The end of April was sweet and balmy, the sky was shrouded by light grey clouds, and the air softened by late rains. There was no brightness to-day—a sober, chastened hue lay as a mantle over the countryside. The Severn mouth looked like a wide dove-coloured plain, and the distant hills were veiled in misty indistinctness. Every footfall of Meg's hoofs was heard on the softened damp soil of the roads and lanes. The birds were very quiet, and the caw of a rook as it flew overhead sounded unnaturally loud in the stillness. With the next bright sunshine there would be a burst of leaves and flowers, and May-day would probably be full of the beauty of which the poets sung in those olden times.

The ride was for the most part silent, and it was in vain that Karina attempted to break it with commonplaces.

In the heart of both there was pain—in hers the pain which every true woman feels when giving pain by refusing the love of a true man—in his the pain, not

only of disappointment, but of inability to protect her whom he loved, from dangers of which he had a strange fore-shadowing. He could not have defined it, but it was there. At length when within a mile of the Manor he said:—

“If you are in any sore strait or need, Mistress Mountjoy, will you contrive to let me hear?—and if I can aid you in any way with my life, it is yours.”

“I know not that I shall be in a sore strait,” Karina said, “but who can tell? Time bringeth many changes, and these changes may touch me with a heavy hand. If it be so, I will ask your prayers and your help, Master Huchyns.”

“In my secret heart I feel the stirring of a change in this realm. Not alone in this realm is there a seeking after God, and a longing to find Him in His Word. But, Karina, I pray you once again to keep quiet. Let not the suspicion of heresy rest on you. I heard yesterday of a young maiden who had been forcibly carried off to a convent at Almondsbury, because she attended the preaching of William Tyndale at the Cross in Bristol. She knew not who spied her out, but the priest of the parish carried the news to her father, a hot-blooded man, who swore he would have no pestilent heresy in his house; and though she prayed and wept amain, she is buried from sight in that convent. What if thou shouldst be spied on and watched? Even at this moment there is a manuscript in thy possession, which, if seen by any of these lynx-eyed ignoramuses, might bring thee trouble. Be wary, I entreat thee.”

The manuscript of the First Epistle of St. John was indeed concealed in the pocket of Karina's kirtle. She had got it nearly by heart, and it was dearer to her than any ornaments out of the pedlar's pack.

"I thank you for your care for me, Master Huchyns. I will be wary when danger lies before me, but here in the peace of the country I may read as I list in the Book of Life."

"Is it peace here in the country?" said John Huchyns sadly. "Methinks it seemeth more like a sword."

The Manor gates stood wide open, and they rode up the avenue slowly. John Huchyns knew the hour of parting was near, and he would fain lengthen out the time that was left to its utmost limit. He was about to say yet another word of farewell, when a figure stepped across the path, and Hubert Gilford stood just in front of old Meg.

John Huchyns recognised him at once, and he recognised John Huchyns. He doffed his cap, and, looking up at Karina, said as Meg halted at the door,—

"Sir John Walsh and his lady are within. Shall I help you dismount?"

But John Huchyns was too quick for him—he had vaulted from his seat on the pillion, and lifted Karina down before she had time to reply.

Then up from the tennis-court trooped the boys and Cicely—Giles speechless with delight, Hal vociferating at the pitch of his voice,—

"Karina is come home!"

Out flocked men and maids, Tebita at their head, and Sir John and Dame Marjory appeared in the Hall.

"Welcome back to the Manor, but where is my Joan?" Sir John said.

"Left for another week's nursing with Mistress Katherine," Karina said. "She is going to rival your roses, Cicely, after all," as Cicely threw her arms around Karina and gave her a succession of kisses.

"Here is Master Hubert Gilford, Karina," Dame

Marjory said. "Nay, nay, John Huchyns, prythee do not mount your horse. Tarry with us for the night."

"Nay, good lady, it cannot be. I have business to call me home," he said: "and if your men bring Meg a draught of water and a bunch of hay, she and I will go the way we came. Can I bear any message to Mistress Joan?"

"Joan sent you her dutiful greeting," Karina said: and then seeing the eyes of Hubert Gilford fixed on her, she turned away with a blush. Something in those eyes was familiar, though she could not say why.

"Hast left thy pack behind, good master pedlar?" asked John Huchyns in a low tone. "It were a pity to lose so many brave wares."

"It were a pity to keep them, when a fair lady can don the best of 'em," was the reply. "Fine colours suit the dark hair of the Spanish maiden. *Green* is your colour, methinks."

John Huchyns controlled himself with a great effort—he longed to come to a trial of strength with this handsome *ci-devant* pedlar; but though he involuntarily clenched the handle of his short rapier, he made no reply.

"Where is Sir William Tyndale?" Karina asked. "Is he returned?"

"Yes, to our cost," said Hal. "He rapped my knuckles this morning till they smarted."

"An had he rapped thy empty pate, he might have woke some sense in it," said Karina, in her old sharp, bright manner.

"He is leaving us next week," said Giles, who had been gazing on his recovered treasure with his sleepy blue eyes. "He is leaving us, and I am going to Gloucester to the Abbot's, and Hal is to be lodged in the Bristol school, and Cicely——"

"Cicely is to be married, so she thinks."

"Hold your peace, you stupid boy!" Cicely exclaimed, her rosy cheeks becoming more like the peony than the rose. "Hold your peace!"

And now, John Huchyns having drunk the draught of spiced curds and whey which Dame Marjory had ordered, while old Meg had refreshed herself with a drink of water, prepared to depart. He bid a grave farewell to the group at the door, and his last sight of Karina remained with him as a picture never to be effaced from his memory. His brave heart was oppressed and sad, and old Meg heard many a heavy sigh heaved as she pursued her homeward way to Inclyff.

"And is Sir William Tyndale departing to return no more?" Karina asked of Dame Marjory, when she had taken her wheel from the corner and seated herself at it, as if she had not been absent from her place at all.

"Yes," and Dame Marjory sighed. "I am right sorry, but what can we do? He is pretty in his manners, and has writ out for me and Sir John this goodly manuscript. I am but a slow reader, but I have made out enow to feel much shaken in myself. Forsooth, there are some in high places who appear mighty wise, but after all they may be fools. Still, there is my Joan, and doubtless many more like her, too weak to bear strong meat, and wanting milk." Dame Marjory sighed. "I had a letter from Joan's gossip—the Lady Cranstone—brought by the Stroud carrier, and she counsels me to send her to the convent at Almondsbury."

"Oh! nay, prythee do not think of this!" Karina exclaimed. "Shut up in this nunnery, Joan would be brain-sick indeed! Ask Sir William Tyndale; ask—John Huchyns!"

"Nay," said Dame Marjory, drawing herself up.

"Nay; I seek no counsel, Karina, anent my children, of strangers."

"Yet you will take the counsel of the Lady Cranstone. Oh, I pray you, Dame Marjory, speak not of a convent."

"A convent!" It was Hubert Gilford's voice—"and who would close a convent's doors on you, fair Karina? It would be cruel to those left outside!"

Dame Marjory turned round sharply. "Court compliments, Master Hubert; we country folk are unused to them!"

"Pardon, lady; but when one lives amid such beauty and grace as meets one at the Manor, a man forgets all but to show how he is smitten thereby. Youth reigns here, and time seems to have no power, leaving no trace behind him on your brow, nor dimming the lustre of your eyes."

Hubert Gilford threw himself in a careless but graceful attitude on one of the cushioned benches, and, taking up the mandoline, touched the strings with his fingers.

"That is nothing but idle compliments," said Dame Marjory, over whose face, however, had played a bright gleam of satisfaction, at Hubert's well-timed flattery. "Sing the melancholy ditty you say her Highness the Queen affects."

Hubert drew his fingers over the strings, and sang, first the sad strain, then a merrier one, then a love song, in the smattering of Spanish and Provençal, which instantly brought the colour and the light of recognition to Karina's dark eyes.

This then was the pedlar, who had displayed his wares at Inclyff. Hubert Gilford and the packman were identical!

Dame Marjory was called away on some important matter by Tebita, and then Hubert Gilford drew nearer.

"Was it an unpardonable offence to come unknown to look on you, Mistress Mountjoy? It was but a jest. Nay, turn not away with so serious a countenance!"

"I understand not the jest," Karina said. "Why pretend to be a pedlar, and take money from Mistress Katherine?"

"I took no money from *thee*," Hubert Gilford said.

"No; and I can take no gift from a stranger," was the haughty reply.

"Be not angry with me; I have had many grave thoughts of late. The good Sir William Tyndale has spoken to me words which, as I truly told you, have sunk deep. I have been far from sober or righteous, but there is a time for sowing a wild crop, and a time for repenting. Methinks that time is come to me, and your hand might help or might hinder. Think on that, fairest Karina!"

There was a charm about the young man in his softened moods, and in some things he did speak truly. That scene of the dying Brother Edwyn, at Prinknash, had left its mark on him, associated as it was with Tyndale's words. In those days, personations, like Hubert Gilford's of the pedlar, were thought, as he said, mere jests. Such freaks were common amongst the sons of the well-to-do and noble classes, and the love of this was fostered from early years by the masks and shows of court festivals. Hubert Gilford had joined many a gay party of maskers in London, and being naturally quick and clever, in a superficial way he had gathered up a variety of characters and languages, of which he made a medley, as when he personated a pedlar. It would hardly be fair to say that the character he now assumed was altogether unreal. Certain it is he thought he saw in it the way to win Karina's favour.

The noisy free-and-easy traveller, who had been succoured by William Tyndale on the king's highway, showing too evident signs of having drunk too freely of the stoup of wine or ale at the last hostelry, vanished, and in his place was a courtly young gentleman, who professed—perhaps really felt—anxiety to reform, and to walk in the way William Tyndale advised. His curiosity to see Karina Mountjoy had, as we know, first put it into his head to seek out Chipping Sodbury Manor, and bask in the sunshine of her beauty, of which his grave merchant brother had spoken. His disappointment at not seeing her at Sodbury found a relief in the sudden idea of presenting himself to her as a foreign pedlar at Inclyff; and as he had dwelt then on Tyndale's teaching, and saw that by that he interested his listener, so he now determined to follow up his advantage and win her favour.

The conversation was interrupted by Dame Marjory's return. Presently supper was served, and William Tyndale stood in his place, and asked God's blessing on the meal—not in the usual form of invocation in Latin, but in English—which all could follow.

His keen glance read Hubert Gilford's intention without need of any words. He greeted Karina by "Good e'en, Mistress Mountjoy; how fares your patient, and my pupil, Mistress Joan?" Then refusing all Sir John's pressing offers of wine or ale, and Lady Walsh's of a savoury stew, which had been prepared by her own hands, he craved leave to retire, and his place at the board was empty.

It was not till the hour of study drew near the next morning that Karina could exchange a word with the tutor. He came into the study early, after the first service in the church, and found her restoring the study to the brightness which in her absence it had lacked.

She had been up early, as was her wont, and primroses and fair wind-flowers were now ornamenting the room, while Giles had, at her order, gathered up the dead and withered rushes, and strewn fresh ones on the floor.

Karina's face flushed with joy when she answered William Tyndale's greeting and exclamation of pleasure.

"The study has put on its old brightness again," he said. "It is easy to see whose hands have been at work!"

"I am right well pleased you look kindly on it, Father," she answered; "but if so, why leave it and us so soon?"

"Because God hath called me, Karina. I have no other reason. Yon scatter-brained fellow, Hubert Gilford, has promised to find me an asylum in his father's household till I can gain an entrance into my Lord Bishop's of London. The path seems made clear. I met the boy on the king's highway, and rendered him some slight service. It seemeth that he is a link in the chain of God's providence; but I would fain not leave him to idle here," Tyndale said. "I desire to take him to Bristol with me, where I put up in the house of a kinsman of Tebita, to whom she hath writ an epistle of recommendation."

"Tebita writing a letter!" and Karina laughed. "I would like to see the characters!"

"She hath writ it by my fingers, and signed by her mark. But Karina—Mistress Mountjoy I ought to call you—I would speak of this Master Hubert Gilford. It may be that the Lord has touched his heart; perhaps it is so; but there will need much threshing of the chaff, and purging the floor, before he is worthy to be regarded with favour by such as thou art. Forgive me," he went on, as Karina's eyes flashed with a light he had scarce ever seen in them. "Forgive me, nor think me meddle-

some; but if, as he boldly avers, he cometh hither to win your favour, let him be put on trial. Surrender not too easily."

"Is that my wont?" Karina asked proudly and angrily. "Am I indeed such a poor fool that I give heed to all that flattering tongues may say? If a fair-spoken young gentleman from the outer world comes to our country solitude, am I to frown and sulk? Master Hubert Gilford is nought to me, and I——" she stopped, for William Tyndale's eyes were fixed on her with such a grave sad earnestness of reproach that she quailed beneath them. "I'll not brook being rated like an infant," she said. Then her anger dissolved in tears, and she hastily left the study, and going to her chamber wept bitterly.

"That I should grieve him and speak sharp," she sobbed: "and he is departing from us, and we shall hear no more his words of counsel!"

"Karina, Karina!" Cicely called in her loud, incisive voice. "Come at once. We wait in the study, and we have a new pupil and scholar to-day—Master Hubert Gilford."

Karina dipped her face in the cold water left in the wooden bowl, which had served for her morning's ablutions, and calling to Cicely not to wait for her, she smoothed her dark locks under their crimson coif, and in a few moments was in the study. Her sad air of penitence was very touching to the tutor, and quiet and subdued Karina was even more fascinating to Hubert Gilford.

"Forgive me, Father!" she said, when the lessons were over, "and grant me full pardon for my hasty words."

"Ah, Karina," was the reply, "I think not twice of them. But let me say again, my cautioning words are for thy good."

Karina bowed her head, and William Tyndale laid his hand upon it:—

“The Lord bless thee and keep thee, the Lord make His face to shine on thee, and give thee peace.”

“Pray that I may be steadfast,” Karina faltered, “if the need arises; pray that I may never give up the blessing of the Gospels in the tongue which I speak. I have the manuscript of the Epistle of Saint John: I crave leave to make a fair copy and keep it.”

“Keep it—in my handwriting,” Tyndale said, “and hold fast the Word which is therein, to thy eternal good. Dear child, farewell.”

These were nearly the last words which passed between those two at Sodbury.

When the villagers were dancing round the pole on the green on May-day—when young men and maidens were up before the dawn to gather the May-dew, and count the petals of the daisies to find out who should be married first before another May-day,—when the sound of flageolet and flute, of drum and fife sounded merrily, as “the Queen of the May” was escorted to the Manor to receive the usual offerings of cakes and mead, and a long ribbon for the pole, in this season of rejoicing and festivity,—William Tyndale turned away from Sodbury Manor, and from the height of a neighbouring grassy hill he bade it farewell. Like one of old, he went forth not knowing whither he went; but, like the great father of the faithful, he trusted in God’s promise, and was content to follow the guiding Hand, and be led by a path which he knew not.

As he looked back upon the village he had left, on the little church with its tall cypresses, and the picturesque gables of the Manor, he lifted up his hands and asked for God’s blessing on those he had left behind.

Then before him rose, as in a vision, the coming time, when the voice of joy and health should be heard in the dwellings of the rich and poor, and the Word of the Gospel of Peace be read by the winter fire, and in the bright sunshine of May-days like this.

He bore with him Sir John Walsh's introduction to Sir Harry Gilford, and a sealed letter from his son Hubert, and in his leathern purse was his wage for service as a tutor. So with the prospect of finding an entrance into the household of Tonstall, the Bishop of London, he thought he had a fair prospect of success. In the great city there would be wider scope to carry out his work; there would surely be sympathy for him from scholars and divines. With these high hopes struggling with the sorrowful regret on leaving Sodbury, he went bravely on his way to Bristol. He had promised to preach once again in "St. Augustine's Back," where hungry souls had eagerly hung on his words on the previous summer evenings. That he might meet anger and contumely there, that he might even be seized and stopped on his way, did not concern him. He had been tried before the Ordinary, but no real cause of offence had been proved against him; but he knew his enemies were all on the alert—that the eyes and ears were open of those who were ready to pounce down on him, as a hawk on its prey.

But as he walks over grassy slopes and through quiet meadows, William Tyndale is not alone. There is One with him, and His form (invisible to mortal eyes) is the form of the Son of God.

CHAPTER X.

GUESTS.

LADY CRANSTONE, with a somewhat overflowing retinue of servants, bore down upon the Old Manor House the day after William Tyndale had left it. She had been Joan's godmother, and took considerable interest in her godchild. She was a widow, wealthy and childless; a rigid Roman Catholic; gloomy and ascetic, hard and implacable. She was a tall, commanding-looking woman, with a fine stern countenance. Her confessor was always in attendance, and perhaps she confided to him her faults: certainly to others she never allowed she had one! Rumours had reached her that the tutor at Sodbury Manor was undermining the creed of her godchild, and making himself a target for the arrows of the faithful by his heretical opinions. Lady Cranstone felt she had a mission, and as a good daughter of the Church she intended to fulfil it.

Dame Marjory stood very much in awe of Lady Cranstone, and the whole Manor House was in a ferment when her *avant courier* rode up about 9 o'clock to announce the approach of his lady from her castle near Stroud. But it spoke well for the excellent working machinery of the household, that before the hour of supper, postponed to five, had arrived, all things were in readiness to receive the great lady. Dame Marjory wore her best petticoat of rich satin, and a long overcoat or bodice of light grey homespun, made with tight sleeves, slashed with the same material as her skirt. She wore a high head-dress of white muslin, with lappets peaked in front, and set in the centre of the peak was a brilliant topaz. Cicely wore a flowered dress, made like her mother's, and her

long golden-reddish hair, simply bound back by a gay ribbon, reached nearly to her heels. Karina looked queenlike in a black bodice, opened to show delicate muslin puffs and frills from the throat to the waist, with hanging sleeves; her petticoat was crimson, and her head-dress was after the Spanish fashion, formed of a peaked velvet band, from which hung some costly black lace, which had been her mother's. There could have been no head-dress better suited to set off her beautifully chiselled features, the curve of her slender throat, and the delicately moulded ear, from which two heavy pearl earrings were suspended. When Sir John and his boys joined the group, Sir John exclaimed:—

“It is as if the King's Highness were expected. I confess I wish we were donning our fine clothes to receive some more cheery guest.”

Dame Marjory shook her head.

“Prythee, show all due courtesy to my Lady Cranstone: and Giles and Hal back to your chambers, and don your blue jerkins with the wide ruffles! Did I not bid you to do it? Away, sirs; tarry not an instant.”

Hal kicked his foot impatiently, and Giles looked sulky.

“What odds,” he muttered, “to dress up for an old——”

“Hush! fie for shame,” Karina said, tapping Giles with the long black fan she wore at her girdle, “nor be so discourteous.”

“Master Hubert said he would not make himself gaudy for an old woman and her followers. He said——”

Hal was interrupted by the appearance of Master Hubert himself in the hall. He might not have made himself “gaudy,” but he had the unmistakable air of the “gentleman about the court,” which the others, Sir

John and his sons, missed. His black velvet doublet and short full pantaloons, meeting black hose at the knee, was quiet enough, but became him well. He held his plumed hat in his hand—the round wide hat, which Henry the Eighth had made the fashion—and his shapely hands were set off by cambric ruffles.

“We are assembled to greet royalty, methinks,” was Hubert’s remark to Karina. “This coming lady should sure feel flattered.”

“I doubt if she is capable of such an earthly feeling,” Karina said contemptuously. “She was our guest a year ago, and she then rated us for our scant observance of Lent, and was wrathful when she found we kept not the hours of compline. Now it is not the Lenten season her temper may be sweeter, but I confess I like not the thought of her errand hither.”

“What is that errand?” Hubert Gilford asked.

“To take Joan away to a convent. Joan is her god-child.”

“But Joan is not here.”

“Inclyff is not so far away, and the Lady Cranstone has folks, and to spare, to do her bidding: her confessor, a certain Father Francis for one! He has before to-day been seen at many boards, and certain it is he gets the ear of many unsuspecting people, and gathers up what he hears for his lady’s edification.”

“Hark, they are coming!”

“Karina, Cicely, they come!” Lady Walsh exclaimed from her post of observation by the small pierced window to the right of the large entrance door.

“Go forth to receive the Lady Cranstone, Sir John! Run, Tebita, and summon those idle boys. I despatched them to change their jerkins. Call them; haste, Tebita!”

Then, as Tebita obeyed, Dame Marjory composed

herself, the door was thrown wide open, and Sir John Walsh and Hubert Gilford, attended by two of the serving men, answering to the footmen of to-day, wearing their master's badge on their sleeves, went out to meet the procession which was slowly filing up to the door.

"A fear hath seized me, Karina," Dame Marjory exclaimed, "that the box of incense and tapers is not placed on the shelf in my lady's room by the crucifix. Run and assure me thereof: for my heart goeth pit-a-pat. Lady Cranstone is wont to miss aught connected with devotion."

Karina went swiftly to the guest-chamber and found that poor Dame Marjory's fears were without foundation. Helter-skelter came the boys from their improved toilette, and, in passing the landing by the guest-chamber, Giles knocked over a large jar or earthen vase, which was, happily, empty, but the floor was strewn with the fragments of pottery, close to the guest-chamber door.

"Giles," said Karina, "one had as lieve see a young bull in doors. Laugh not so loud Hal, it will disturb Dame Marjory. Run down to the door both of you, and I will sweep away the fragments. Dearie me, what a clatter and fuss."

Happily a maid had heard the crash, and came to the rescue, and Karina was at liberty to return to the hall.

Sir John was just handing in the tall black-robed figure of the Lady Cranstone as Karina took her place by Cicely and Dame Marjory, curtseying low with dutiful reverence.

Close behind the lady, with bent head and eyes which always studied the ground, came the pale, thin confessor, Father Francis; a train of waiting women, and footmen, and grooms to attend to the palfreys and the two sumpter mules surrounding the porch.

"Right welcome to Old Sodbury Manor, your ladyship," said Dame Marjory, over whose head the tall, stately, pillar-like figure of the guest towered.

"We thank you, Dame Marjory," Lady Cranstone said, kissing as much of Lady Walsh's forehead as could be available for the purpose under the erection which shadowed it. "And your daughters: let them come hither. This is Cicely, I know by her roses, and Mistress Karina Mountjoy, but where is my own godchild, Joan?"

"An it please you, the child hath been ailing of late, and she is gone for a while to Inclyff, to our good neighbours Master John and Mistress Katherine Huchyns."

"Kinsfolk of the tutor who hath wrought such mischief here,—to name him is methinks a sin, and lips need be purged after that name passeth them."

The confessor cast up his eyes, crossed himself, and looked down again while his lady thus delivered herself.

"But I enter not into that matter. My desire is to see and help the dear child, and ease her soul of her burden, that she may be assoiled therefrom; but more of this anon. And now I will seek my chamber till supper is served. She waved her hand to her maids, and Tebita heading the procession, while Lady Cranstone leaned on Dame Marjory's arm, they ascended the wide staircase to the guest-chamber.

Father Francis followed, and entering the room, arranged the crucifix, prostrated himself, and Lady Cranstone and her maids kneeling behind, the priest gabbled through a form of prayer which was understood to be a benediction of the chamber, and then withdrew. Dame Marjory also left her stately guest to her toilet, and returned to superintend the putting up of the large retinue.

"A penance this for such grand guests, verily," said

Sir John. "Well, I grumble not for one night, nay for two, but I mislike and mistrust that hollow-checked priest, Father Francis. He may put up where he lists. They'll all have to pack like lampreys in a cask."

"The upper floor is all prepared," said Dame Marjory; "disturb not thyself, good husband."

"Nay, nay, that is not my wont, wife. And food enow—is there food enow?"

"To put such a query, when there is the tenderest and best calf cut up for roast and pasties, and herons stuffed to thy liking, and the young peacock."

"Nay, not that choicest bit for them, surely!" Sir John murmured. "Besides, who can taste it?"

"The Lady Cranstone and thyself," was the prompt reply. "The youngsters would not eat of such a dainty; and for myself, I'd as lieve eat a pullet or rook. Peacocks are wont to be tough, with all one's care with the spit."

Good Dame Marjory had long ago professed not to care for any dainty that others craved. Although she was the spirit and soul of all the culinary processes that went on in the Manor kitchen and dairy, she fed on simple fare herself at her own table. If she tasted many dishes at the houses of her neighbours, it was simply to test their excellence as compared with her own, and to imitate or avoid as the case might be.

Households managed after the fashion of Dame Marjory Walsh's are a pleasant feature of those times, when every country gentleman's domain retained something of the old feudal type, and there was ever to be found heads to rule and plan, and hands to serve and execute orders, for hospitalities such as these which Dame Marjory was now extending to the Lady Joan Cranstone.

The supper passed off as smoothly as heart could wish. Lady Cranstone praised the viands, and marked

one for special favour—the slaughtered peacock, only that morning spreading its lovely feathers on the terrace.

At the close of the lengthy meal, Father Francis began, at a sign from his mistress, to read in a low twanging voice from a manuscript, purporting to be the Life of St. Catharine and her miraculous visions. If it were in English, his hearers were scarcely the wiser, and so many Latin phrases were introduced that very little sense could be made of the history.

Karina thought within herself how marked a contrast was the voice and the substance to those which had so lately been heard there. For often when William Tyn-dale read in his office of chaplain at meal-times, he would single out some striking passage from the life of the Lord: and when the superiors had withdrawn, he would read it to the servants, who took their meals immediately afterwards at the lower end of the great board—which this evening was garnished with all manner of dishes—dishes so numerous that it would have been a puzzle to count them or give them each a name.

In a softened and tender mood, Karina stepped out into the pleasaunce, still all aglow with the western sunshine of the soft May evening.

Lady Walsh had withdrawn with her guest to the inner chamber which I have described, and Cicely, at her mother's order, was arranging the poor peacock's feathers into a fan to hang against the wall as an ornament. She was obliged to seat herself on a low wooden stool at her mother's feet: and Dame Marjory felt a pardonable pride in the possession of her bright, rosy maiden, with her long golden tresses, as she thought that the great lady, with all her state and riches and many servants, was a childless widow.

The boys stood by the door awaiting their mother's

commands, and as Lady Cranstone did not vouchsafe the word of praise for which maternal hearts yearn for their sons and daughters, she said—

“You have tasks for your father, Giles and Hal, and had best depart to con them.”

“And their sister, hath she no task?”

Lady Walsh took the hint, and bidding Cicely gather up the feathers, she gave her leave to follow her brothers. Cicely delighted to be free, turned over her stool, scattered the feathers, and was gone as swiftly as the constraint of her best clothes allowed.

“She is a fine girl, Lady Walsh,” Lady Cranstone condescended to say. “Her hair might be cropped, methinks, or built up in more becoming fashion; but it is of your other daughter that I wish to speak. She is mine by the bond which the Church asserts to be sacred, and I pray you, Dame Marjory, to be frank with me concerning her. Report sayth that she is brain-sick, and all because of the heresy of that tutor you harboured—that snake in the household garden which hath poisoned the life of your choicest flower. Is it so?”

“Nay, my Lady Cranstone,” Dame Marjory began. “It would be cruel and dishonest to lay all the child’s vagaries to that source. She hath ever been, as you know, a weak and tender plant—she hath an over-quickness of brain, and learned too much from——”

“Yes, forsooth, so much,” interrupted Lady Cranstone, “that the unlearning must be begun in good earnest. The Manor is clear now of that rank heretic: thus I will not speak of him—I desire not to speak of him—but of Joan I must and will speak. I have the child’s soul on my conscience, and how can I turn away from the duty? I propound to you, Lady Walsh, two things—that she be committed to the dear Mother of the

Almondsbury Nunnery of the Order of St. Catharine, or that I take her with me to Cranstone Castle, there to be put under the teaching and spiritual direction of Father Francis. I conjure you, as you love your child's soul, as you would save her from torment hereafter, let me administer the potion which shall be as an antidote to the poison she has taken through the—I crave pardon, Dame Marjory—through the neglect of her natural parents.”

To be rated thus in her own house was an uncomfortable experience for poor Dame Marjory. She, who had always the last word with her own people, and held, as we know, a tolerably tight rein in driving children, servants, and dependants, to say nothing of Sir John himself, in her own way, felt utterly overpowered by the slow, yet not the less incisive words of her grand guest.

Seated in a high-backed chair, straight as a dart, robed in rich black velvet, unrelieved by any brightness, except the light which the polished beads of her huge rosary caught from the slanting western beams, her finely cut features, stern and uncompromising, her forehead altogether concealed by a thick muslin whimple, which was closely smoothed round the chin, her long hands folded one over the other, still symmetrical in shape, though veined and lined with age, Lady Cranstone was indeed a formidable personage, and Dame Marjory felt her to be so.

Her small delicate figure, which was, as Hubert Gilford told her, singularly youthful, quivered with concealed emotions, which were a mixture of maternal love and sorrow and indignation that she should be so taken to task for having failed in her duty to Joan. Dame Marjory was too much of the gentlewoman to resent her guest's discourtesy; and moreover, although during the last few

days, since the reading of Erasmus' Enchiridion, which by the help of Karina and Sir John she had fully understood, her views of William Tyndale and his teaching were much modified, still she had a due sense of the infallibility of the Church, and above all things, dreaded to bring herself or her children under the suspicion of being heretics.

Sorely as she was grieved in her heart to lose the tutor, she was relieved that he was gone; and the reproach of harbouring a heretic could no more be cast up against her.

"Joan," she began, "good my Lady Cranstone is very regular at mass, at confession, and all things required of her children by the Church. Methinks you take a wrong view, I crave pardon, of the child's illness. It is of the body more than the mind, and I think that the air and good tending which she has now at Inclyff will soon restore her. I would have her home soon to bear me company, and help in my household matters. No books, the leech sayth, but plentiful air and milk, and she will be well."

"That toucheth not the question, Lady Walsh. As I hear, the child's sickness is of the soul. She is said to have carried about with her one of the Holy Gospels in the English tongue, that this priest has, contrary to the order of his superiors, written from the Greek. It is monstrous that he should thus dare transgress the laws of the Church, openly defy His Holiness, and do mischief to poor deluded souls. I have a duty to perform towards the poor child Joan, and by your leave, I will call for her at Inclyff on my way home, and put her under Father Francis for instruction. I have always had it in my mind to account Joan as my daughter, and to leave her such a portion as would befit that position.

This can only be done by her being purged from all taint of heresy. Say, Dame Marjory, have I not your leave to take the child with me to Castle Cranstone for a space?"

"I must consult Sir John," was the hesitating answer. "I dare not move in the matter without his leave. I thank you heartily for your goodness to the child, and care for her. May she prove worthy thereof."

The tapestry curtain which hung between the inner room and the hall quivered, and Dame Marjory, thinking it was Cicely or Giles, went quickly to lift it. She was confronted by Father Francis. He had heard every word of the conversation, standing concealed, by the thick wall of the partition through which the wide opening had been cut, from observation of those in the hall.

"The time for vespers is at hand, your Ladyship," he said, moving not a muscle of his face nor raising his eyes.

Dame Marjory hastened to summon such of her household as could be freed from their duties, to the chapel, which had not been used much of late, as William Tyn-dale had officiated in the church.

The priest and his mistress were left alone.

"The lamb must be rescued from the jaws of the lion," he said, "by any means and in any way."

"I hope to gain her parents' consent, blind bats though they be."

"We must not wait for that," was the reply. "If the maiden is to be endowed with wealth it must be used for the Church. She will be safe in the convent. She must be taken thither."

"We will tarry till to-morrow, before deciding, Father. Then I leave it in your hands."

These were days when all who thought seriously of

the state of the Church, on both sides, knew that a change was at hand. No thoughtful or zealous Romanist, but feared for the safety of the Church. The king was no trusty staff to lean on; his moods were as variable as the wind. If these affected qualms of conscience which it began to be rumoured made him uneasy as to his marriage with his brother's widow, could get him a dispensation to put her away, well and good. But if the Pope did not grant it, he would do without the Pope, shake off his allegiance, let the result be what it might.

That the safety of the Church was endangered, men like Father Francis knew too well: and to keep a firm hold, even on a weak girl like Joan Walsh, was worth any sacrifice; or rather made any lie or any subterfuge allowable and praiseworthy.

If Lady Cranstone made Joan her heiress, and thus circumvented the designs of the kinsman of her late husband, who with the title hoped to inherit her riches, which were her own and independent of it, then it followed that Joan must be brought into entire submission to the Church. There must be no nibbling at heresy, implied by reading the Word of God in her own tongue,—no sympathy with a man who had been arraigned before the Chancellor. To work upon the sensitive imaginative girl, and fetter her with the bonds of unreasoning submission and ignorant acquiescence, this was the work Father Francis laid himself out to perform. But the light having once shone upon the soul, the spark being once kindled by the Spirit of God, neither my Lady Cranstone, nor Father Francis, nor the Pope himself, shall be able to darken or put it out.

CHAPTER XI.

SPIES.

KARINA turned away, as she hoped, from observation to a retired path leading away towards the church—the path by which the family passed on their way to service. The stillness of the evening was soothing, and she felt its influence. The restlessness which had lately possessed her seemed subdued, and she walked up and down between two yew hedges, clipped straight and level, till at the end they rose to some twenty feet, and were cut in a succession of circles of eight or ten inches thickness to represent Gloucester cheeses. The quaint figures of birds, which might be cocks or swans, or something between the two, surmounted each pile. To keep these figures smoothly clipped and in good form was a part of the gardener's duty. At one end of the alley was a turnstile into the churchyard, at the other a bower, cut also in fantastic fashion, with a rustic seat and a floor of black and white checkerwork of oak and elm.

Karina drew out her precious manuscript and read some words from it, pacing slowly from one end of the alley to the other, and repeating the words as she went.

"Tenderly beloved, if our hertes condemne us not, then have we trust to God warde, and whatsoever we ask we shall receave of Hym, because we kepe His commandments and do those thynges which are pleasyng in His sight. And this is His commandment, that we beleve on the name of His Sonne Jesus Christ, and love one another as He gave commandment."

"It is scarce in my heart to love a sourfaced grim woman like my Lady Cranstone," Karina said, "and I fear me she hath some ill design with that smooth-

tongued Father Francis anent my little Joan. Poor little Joan!"

Karina stopped. There was a rustle in the bower just as she turned to retrace her steps. She looked back, and a dark figure glided out and disappeared, while another came in sight.

"I have been seeking you, Mistress Karina. Why do you affect this sombre dark alley, haunted by priests, it seems? That oily Father Francis has just crept past me on his way to the pleasaunce."

Instantly Karina remembered that she had not only read from her manuscript aloud, but thought aloud, and she knew enough of the zeal of such folks as Father Francis to be sure he would not scruple to brand her with that name so freely applied to her master, William Tyndale.

"What is that book?" Hubert Gilford asked, as Karina was replacing it in her pocket. "Is it a book or a letter?"

"It is both," Karina replied, "the Epistle of St. John, which I cherish for the sake of him who writ it for me in the English tongue. It is folded in the form of a book, and tied with silken cords."

"It is scarce safe for you to bear it about," Hubert Gilford said; "sharp eyes are on you, I doubt not. Was ever there a more wearisome old grandame than yon Lady Cranstone? Phaugh! it maketh one sick at the name of religion, while teachers like Sir William Tyndale draw a man's heart after him."

"Aye, verily," Karina said with a sigh. "I wonder much how he will speed in London. Think you he will gain an entrance into the Lord Bishop's household by your father's word?"

"It shall not be my fault if he fails. I too must be

making my way thitherward. Grave thoughts have come to me, Mistress Mountjoy. I feel scarce the same man as when I rode heated with wine along the Cheltnam highway—nay, nor the same as came helter-skelter down yon hillside, when I accosted your good kinsman. It seemeth to me that I have poured out my life to waste—my five and twenty years seem to have wrought harm rather than good, and I would fain amend.”

Is there a woman worthy the name, who does not kindle into interest when a man tells her he longs to begin life afresh, and does she not wish to strengthen his good resolves by every means in her power?

“The time past seemeth to suffice,” Hubert said. “I am sick of all the jollities and freaks I thought so pleasant.”

“Sick of passing off as a pedlar, and speaking a medley of tongues as varied as thy wares?” Karina asked mischievously.

“Yes, Mistress Mountjoy, but it was the longing to see thee which led me to Inclyff. I confess I erred. I made pretence as to Spain—I have never set foot in it. I picked up the story of thy kinsmen from Amyas, my brother, who had heard it here at Sodbury. I confess it was an acted part, but is not such mummary practised continually in the hall at Court? Disguises are assumed and dropped for the amusement of the ladies, and even of her Highness the Queen. I have heard tell of Sir Charles Brandon, now his Grace of Suffolk, coming to a tournament disguised as a hermit poor, in a grey gown and lowly weeds, to crave permission to tilt in her Highness’s honour. Is it then so grave an offence that I should lay at your feet, who are as a queen to me, the goods from a pack: and methinks you know you were welcome to all that was spread before you. That scarf——”

“Is to be worn at Whitsun by Mistress Katherine

Huchyns," Karina said archly. "It were a pity to disappoint her of what she so greatly affected, and it may compensate for the silver pieces she dropped into your hand in payment for the beads and rings."

Hubert Gilford tried to laugh, but he resolved to seek after Karina's favour by other means than gay-coloured scarves and pedlar's jargon.

And now the talk grew graver, and Hubert, feeling his ground, dwelt much on Sir William Tyndale, his solemn words, the scene with the dying Brother Edwyn, the tender care he showed for him, his courage and determination. Karina loved to hear these details, and Hubert pressed his advantage to the uttermost.

"You will see him in London, and listen to his counsel," she exclaimed, "while we are left here in the midst of ravenous wolves who would fain tear the lambs to pieces, and bring us all into trouble."

"Why will you not come to London with me?" Hubert ventured to ask.

Karina turned her dark eyes full on him, exclaiming, "*With you!*"

"Aye, with *me*, as my bride. Karina, you say you believe that apart from all man's devices and the machinations of the wicked there is the hand of the Lord guiding His children. Has He not guided me here, and for my soul's good? Am I so distasteful to you, Karina, that you turn away?"

"Nay," she answered sadly; "but I cannot see my way before me. Still——"

The hesitation and faltering voice gave Hubert Gilford hope.

"I have been idle and pleasure-loving too long; but, Karina, if you can love me, you will raise me up from all low and mean indulgence. You shall be my good angel,

minister to me, and keep my steps in the right way. I am whole and soul with you in the desire to heed Sir William Tyndale's teaching—you shall do as you list. My worthy father will give me separate maintenance, for he has said, 'Seek a good help meet as thy mother was to me, and leave gay pranks behind thee at the marriage altar.' Ah! Karina, Karina—turn me not back to the world and the devil perchance, a sick hearted man."

Hubert, who had drawn Karina within the bower, knelt on one knee, after the fashion of the time, and poured forth a rapid flood of protestations and passionate love. Very different this to the grave, earnest wooing of John Huchyns!

Karina's heart beat fast and her lips trembled, even as a young sapling shivers when a strong breeze sweeps over it. Hubert had taken both her hands, and was covering them with kisses, when a slight movement near by, made him start to his feet. He darted out, to catch sight of Giles striding through the turnstile, and as he was rushing in pursuit, he saw a dark figure standing close under the yew-tree at the end of the alley. It was Father Francis, with his missal in his hand, murmuring the office for the hour, crossing himself vigorously as he did so.

"Eavesdropping!" exclaimed Hubert scornfully. "It doubtless is a profitable occupation, and is well paid."

Not one word did Father Francis vouchsafe in reply to this, but vanished, murmuring the Latin words in the same rapid undertone.

That night, however, Lady Cranstone knew the sentiments of Hubert Gilford, of Karina's possession of the written Word—of the work the arch heretic Tyndale had left as the trail of the serpent behind him.

"The Manor," said Father Francis, "must be purged

before the child whom Lady Cranstone had held and named at the font could return to it."

"She shall not return," was the answer. "I will halt at Inclyff to-morrow, and take her parents' authority to remove her to Cranstone Castle, and thence, with or without parental authority, to the shelter of the convent at Almondsbury."

There was no pity in the hearts of those who thus plotted to secure as they thought the salvation of the gentle, sensitive girl, who needed the tenderest care both of body and mind. There was no pity, for the eyes of Lady Cranstone were fixed on one point. In her narrow soul, steeped in the bigotry of her creed, satisfied that to snatch one soul from the dangers of heresy was a work acceptable to God, and would be as so many years struck off her appointed purgatorial fire, pity could find no place. Father Francis, though she knew it not, ruled her with an iron rod. She was proud and haughty and self-sufficient, but she was his slave. He had decreed that Joan must be removed from her home, and so it must be.

We look back on these times with shrinking and perhaps disgust. We think with horror of plots and machinations, which, in a very few years from the evening when poor little Joan Walsh's fate was sealed, were to kindle the hot fires of bitter persecution.

But perhaps that same pity which found no place in ignorant hearts where the light had never shone, befits us better. Let us who have the light of the written Word take heed. Is there nothing of this spirit left amongst us? Are we not too ready to say, Stand by, I am holier than thou? to contend for the non-essentials, while we forget and neglect the essentials? And are we not slow to deny ourselves—to sacrifice our time, our

strength, and our means—in order to communicate to others the faith, which by William Tyndale's hand was first laid before the English people, and is now circulated wherever the English tongue is spoken? Read in our churches and in our families, printed in every type for the eyes of old and young, the Word of Life lies open before us. Are we so far in advance, in the faith that worketh by love, of the Lady Cranstone and Father Francis of the sixteenth century? Let us each answer that question for ourselves, and neglect neither the study of the Gospels of the Lord Jesus, in all their majestic simplicity, nor the practical and holy doctrines they set forth.

“Brethren,” said St. John, “if our hearts condemn us not, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things.”

Giles went back to the house heavy at heart. He had felt instinctively that he need not fear the rivalry of John Huchyns-Tyndale. Love quickens all perceptions, and, dull though he was, he had seen the parting between Karina and her late host at Inclyff with a great throb of satisfaction.

“If she cares for none other, she may yet care for me,” he thought; but now he read in her expressive face anything but indifference for the courtly young gentleman who was, he saw, winning her favour more decidedly every day.

Giles went into the study after he had escaped from the alley, and burying his face on his folded arms, some very suspicious drops wetted the sleeves of his smart blue jerkin, and left dark stains on them. To his surprise he was startled by his mother's voice.

“I am seeking Karina Mountjoy,” she said. “I would

..

fain speak to her about Joan. What ails thee, Giles? what is amiss?"

"I have a ramping toothache," said Giles readily. "It grinds and gnaws like a saw."

"Poor fellow! Get thee to bed, and I will send Tebita up with some hot poultice and a draught. But never cry for a pain—that is like a babe. I must hasten to find Karina. She has made herself scarce enow, and there is Cicely soiling her flowered gown in the boat with Hal. I see them from the casement. Verily that duck-pond shall be drained dry. I must go and order the spiced wine and comfits which the Lady Cranstone will take in her chamber, and thou shalt have a good sup of the same. Haste thee to bed, boy; and mind thy blue suit is duly brushed and folded."

Away went Dame Marjory to the kitchen, where there was a great cleaning and clearing up going on after the banquet, and the servants of Lady Cranstone were congregated at the lower end of the hall.

Tebita appeared from the buttery, and was considerably flustered, and no wonder, with the accession of guests in the Manor kitchen.

"Thou hast a bottle of Rhenish wine, Tebita—give it to me quick, and the spice-boxes, and the kettle, and a bundle of sweet herbs for flavouring. I must prepare a hot posset for my Lady Cranstone, and toast a round of the wheaten-cake for a sop. Master Giles has gone to bed crazed with toothache, and he must have a mug of the spiced wine, and a poultice of the camomile flower."

"That'll not ease his pain," Tebita said. "I'm pretty nigh distraught with all these guests, and if there's love-sick boys to coddle and croon over, I am not the one to do it. Toothache—fiddlesticks!"

It was not often that Tebita so forgot her manners,

and she showed her penitence by meekly receiving the sharp reprimand from her mistress delivered in her most ringing voice, so that all the subordinates could hear it.

"Fie on you for your impudence!" exclaimed Dame Marjory. "You'll do my behest, posset or no posset, or you'll part company with me come next Candlemas. A pretty thing, when hirelings strut about with airs, and scorn their betters!"

Poor Tebita knew well enough that she, who had served in Sir John Walsh's household ever since he brought home his bride, could not be so lightly dispensed with. She made no rejoinder, but devoted herself to toasting the wheaten-cake before the fire, while her lady mixed the wine with a little syrup, and flavoured it with spice, using so many different sorts that it was wonderful how the mixture could be acceptable to any palate.

By the time the preparation of this "hot cup" was completed, Tebita's face had been wetted by several tears, which she wiped away with the back of her hand; and Lady Walsh, satisfied that there was no hot posset to equal the one she poured into a massive silver cup, with a lid bearing the crest of the Walshes on it, forgot her anger, and tripped away with it to the chamber of the Lady Cranstone.

That night, when Karina had let her dark hair fall over her like a cloud, and had divested herself of her tight fitting jacket, she heard a sharp rap at her door. In the twilight—for no one was allowed a light to go to bed by in the Manor after Easter—she saw a form enveloped in a curiously fashioned loose garment, with a headgear of many flaps and frills, and Dame Marjory came swiftly in.

"Karina!—out of thy bed still, dreaming by the casement! It is past nine of the clock, and I was afeard

I should find thee asleep. Karina, we have agreed to suffer Joan to go to Castle Cranstone for a space. Good air and a grand house, and——”

“Do not, I prythee,” Karina exclaimed, “suffer it! The child will be unhappy. Let her return hither, I prythee, Lady Walsh.”

“Nay, my word is given. Karina, I came to beg thee to pen a letter to the dear child. Say I will come ere long to Castle Cranstone and fetch her home, but that I think a visit to her godmother will be wholesome for her body and soul. I write but ill and with so much pains. The letter must be ready by ten of the clock, when her ladyship starts. Ay, verily, I am tired out; it hath been a busy day though a proud one. For 'tis not every house where my Lady Cranstone tarries as she doth here.”

“It is not every house that doth crave her presence, methinks, or receive her and her train with such noble hospitality,” said Karina. “I mislike the Lady Cranstone, and still more her confessor. He has been flitting hither and thither like a bat from the green alley to the house, and back again—eavesdropping and mischief-making, I'll warrant. Nay, I cannot bear to think of our little Joan held fast by their fetters and bands!”

“Tut, tut—many a high-born maiden would catch the chance gladly. Ask Margaret Lee her mind on't. Thou wilt write the letter, Karina, for I know thou art up with the lark. Karina, that young gallant, Hubert Gilford——”

Karina's cheeks were aflame at once. She was thankful that the darkness concealed her from Dame Marjory's penetrating eyes.

“Methinks he is favouring our Cicely. I know not what her father may say to the match, but I'd be well

pleased. He is so fair spoken, and hath pretty manners. Hath Cicely said aught to thee?"

"Nay," Karina said; "I am not in Cicely's confidence in this matter."

"I'd be well pleased, if so it falls out that these two take to each other. Cicely would make a good housewife, and there is nought to be desired more than a good husband. Hast thou any thought for thyself, Karina, concerning John Huchyns? He would offer thee a safe home and good maintenance."

"I am not changing my estate as yet, Dame Marjory," Karina said, with a touch of bitterness in the tone keener ears than Lady Walsh's would have detected. "So I wish you good-night," adding with a tremulous sadness in her voice, "I would fain relieve you of my maintenance, if that is irksome to you."

"Fie, for shame, Karina!" said Lady Walsh. "Have I ever given thee reason to speak thus? Have I ever treated thee in any sort as an unwelcome guest?—rather as my own daughter. Nay, I like not to hear you speak in this fashion," and before Karina could detain her, the little lady, bristling with her frills and flaps like a pouter pigeon with all feathers erect, was gone.

The long train of Lady Cranstone's servants drew up before Inclyff the next day about noon, and Wolf's deep bay announced it to the mistress, who was in the back part of the house superintending a huge baking of pasties and cakes for Whitsuntide.

Joan was cutting sticks of marjory and chopping mint and thyme for the flavouring of drinks, and singing, as she worked, a ditty which Katherine Huchyns had learned in the days of her youth. Her pale face had a colour in

it, and her eyes were bright. The air of the hills had done its work, and the little sad Joan, with her pinched lips and wan cheeks, had vanished. In her place was a delicate but more healthy-looking maiden, singing instead of sighing, and speaking in a silvery voice as she replied to Katherine's question as to who was approaching.

"I'll run and discover, Mistress Katherine," said Joan—and Joan *could* run now.

"Wolf! Wolf!" she called. "What aileth thee, good Wolf?"

"An it please you, Mistress Joan," said Avic; "there is a train as long as his Highness the Chancellor's approaching. Whoever can it be? There's a grand litter in the midst, with golden and black taffeta hangings, and a crest atop shining like gold. It's the lion, the badge of my Lady of Cranstone, as I live!"

"All these grand folks, and the house in such a plight! What will Mistress Katherine say? Run, Avic, run and tell her, and I may have time perchance to don my velvet kirtle and——"

Joan stopped suddenly, for Father Francis had alighted from his palfrey, and with his eyes as usual studying the ground, and his voice pitched to the right priestly key, said—

"I come to seek the Mistress Joan Walsh, bearing a message from her mother, the Lady Marjory Walsh."

"Is there aught amiss at the Manor?" Joan asked, all the delicate shell-like pink leaving her cheeks, and her white lips trembling so much she could scarcely frame the words.

"They are all in good health of body at the Manor; of the soul it befits me not to speak," Father Francis replied; "of that I dare not speak, verily."

With shaking fingers, Joan was opening the letter

which Father Francis had put into her hands, and it seemed as if the silken knot which tied it round would never be unfastened.

"It is Karina's writing!" she exclaimed, "Karina's, but in my mother's name."

"Deare childe,—This brings you my loving greeting. It is my will that you depart from Inclyff with my Lady Cranstone for a space for thy health, and I will visit thee there ere long, and perchance convey thee home. It is a fine thing for thee to visit thy godmother—a noble lady, known and revered by all men in these parts. I have committed to my Lady Cranstone's woman thy two best kirtles and skirts, and the jacket with the fur lining; also the blue velvet hood and the cambric vest. And prythee, dear daughter, take heed of thy health, and I will see thee after Whitsuntide, and perchance bring thee home.—From thy true and dear Mother."

By the time Joan had reached the end of the letter, Mistress Katherine Huchyns appeared on the scene. Father Francis stood motionless. Wolf, growling low, and with his head resting on his extended paws, eyed him askance with no very friendly glance.

"Hoity, toity! what means all this retinue? Joan, look not like a scared falcon unhooded for the first time. Speak, who is this priest? Enter, Father—there is nought to hinder."

But the priest did not move, nor by his face could one discern that he heard or heeded a word that was said.

"This letter, Mistress Katherine," Joan said, holding the letter towards her.

"Letter! I cannot read it. From whom does it come?"

"My mother," Joan faltered. "Yonder is my Lady Cranstone waiting. I am to return with her to Castle Cranstone."

"Thou wilt do no such thing, and——"

Here one of the grooms who were in attendance on Lady Cranstone approached, saying—

"My lady desires that there be but little delay as possible. She has yet some miles to travel ere sundown."

"I will not give thee up, Joan, save at thy parents' behest. Thy good father, Sir John——"

"Alas! this letter contains my mother's order," said Joan, who was now fairly sobbing. "Oh, Mistress Katherine!"

And now Wolf relaxed his watch on Father Francis, for his master's step was heard, and he went to his side with two stately strides.

Joan turned her tearful face up to John Huchyns, who had his bird on his wrist.

"The palfrey waits," the groom said, beckoning to another groom to lead to the door a sleek little black pony. "Are there any chattels or other baggage for the sumpter mule?"

"Must I go?" Joan said, with another beseeching look at John Huchyns, who was reading the letter with earnest attention. Well he knew whose fingers had traced these carefully formed letters, and his quick eye detected a bit of parchment scarcely two inches wide which was fastened to one end of the silk cord which had been twisted round the letter. Though blank on the outside, John Huchyns guessed truly that it contained some words within. He unfolded it and read—

"Go quietly with the lady—beware of the Father. I will bear thee in mind. In love.—K."

John Huchyns laid his hand on the trembling girl's arm, and said cheerfully—

"A nice palfrey for a ride over the hills on a fair spring day. Hasten, Katherine, and aid the child to be

in readiness." Then in a lower voice he added, "There is a word from Mistress Karina attached to the cord—*she* says, go quietly."

What made Wolf begin again his low growl, and show his fangs?

The Father had moved a few paces nearer, to catch the lower tone in which John Huchyns spoke. He was in full possession of the contents of the letter and the little bit of parchment. Men of his type seldom if ever carried a letter without examining the contents.

"In Almondsbury Nunnery before another week is out," he thought; "there will be no bearing in mind then!"

"What message shall I bear to my lady?" he asked in that low oily monotone which aroused John Huchyns to speak loud and sharp by way of contrast.

"Say that Mistress Joan Walsh will obey my Lady of Cranstone's commands. Stay," as the priest moved off, "leave not my threshold without some bite or sup. I will myself carry the grace cup to my lady."

And as Joan sorrowfully turned away to prepare for departure, Mistress Katherine poured some wine into the silver goblet which she took down from the open oak cupboard, saying—

"Take it then, and this platter of sweetmeats, while I send round a stoup of ale for the men and maids who have tarried so long."

John Huchyns went down the road to the gate, where the litter of the lady of Cranstone Castle was waiting, the bearers resting on the bank, while the litter was supported by some wooden posts with cross-wise planks, answering to what we call trestles. No wonder that so many servants and mules were needed when great ladies went abroad; the paraphernalia of their equipage was of necessity so cumbrous and numerous.

Lady Cranstone was murmuring prayers as she slipped the beads of the rosary through her long fingers, to pass the time.

John Huchyns bent a knee as he drew near, and the heavy curtains of the litter were drawn further back.

"The maiden, is she not ready?"

"She is preparing, good my lady, to accompany you. Meantime, I pray you to taste a little of our best canary, and if it so please you, try a sweet candy."

Lady Cranstone was not by any means unwilling. She nibbled at the sweetmeats, and sipping the wine was altogether very gracious. John Huchyns might be the kinsman of William Tyndale, but he was respectful, and showed a sense of her high estate. She asked him questions as to the timber and the land, and was pleased to lean forward and look at the picturesque old house with some admiration.

John Huchyns sent the weary bearers up to the house to quaff the ale, and Father Francis soon after appeared walking by the side of the black palfrey, on which poor little Joan was seated.

Lady Cranstone extended her hand to be kissed, bade her sit firm and trust the guiding of the pony to the groom, gave the word of command, and very soon *avant courier*, litter, groom, palfrey, and mules with men and women, were out of sight.

"Farewell, farewell," Joan said, kissing and waving her hand to John Huchyns.

"Alas, poor little Joan!" he exclaimed, as he turned back to the house, where his sister stood awaiting him. "Alas! the Cranstone lion has come down upon the lamb, and has her well in its paws—from which may some David have grace to deliver her."

"The cup, the cup—take heed, John, thou art spilling

all the wine that is left. Shame on Lady Walsh to be so dazed by the grandeur of the Lady of Cranstone that she must needs give up her daughter to her! And that I should be in all my work-a-day clothes, and so be unfit to come out to see her ladyship. The poor child went off weeping, and she hath a tender heart—as tender as a babe's. Now I must make up for lost time, and serve dinner. I am well-nigh starved."

CHAPTER XII.

THE PATHWAY OF LIGHT.

THE Bristol of to-day is, alas! fast losing the old picturesque beauty of its high-pitched roofs, black crossed gables, and narrow streets which the sunshine could only reach in slanting beams—streets where sign-boards swung to and fro in the wind above open stores, some rich in colour with the wares brought from over the great western sea which Sebastian Cabot had first crossed from this city of the West. But though many a gabled roof has been lowered in the dust—though narrow streets have been razed and thoroughfares made wide for the greater health and convenience of the inhabitants, salient points remain, and these, illuminated by the brilliant Whitsuntide sunshine, look to our eyes very much as they did to William Tyndale in the year of grace 1523.

The tower of St. Mary Redclyffe, though not then surmounted by a spire, raised a stately head to the sky. St. Stephen's Church stood above the noise and bustle of that part of the city, a little removed from the wharves. Ships lay by the quay, and the sleepy dun-coloured waves could not refuse to smile as they reflected the rose and gold of the sunset sky. The low square tower of

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the Cathedral, then, as now, caught the western glow, and the open space around it was crossed by many of the citizens, who were all in holiday trim. The daughters of the good citizens brought out their new spring ribbons and scarves. The apprentices of many trades were dancing attendance on the fair damsels, and Whitsuntide was celebrated with unusual rejoicing.

There had been masses and high ceremonial in the Cathedral and St. Mary Redclyffe Church. Simon Bragge had been fully occupied with his duties all the forenoon: but now he too was at leisure, and seated with a beaker of ale in the little dark, low-roofed parlour behind his shop. He was a dealer in leather and skins, and his wife did a little in the fur trade, buying the skins from many of the merchants who traded between Bristol and other ports, dressing and preparing them for linings of cloaks and doublets, which the wealthy citizens wore as soon as autumn blasts and chill sea fogs swept up their river from the Channel.

The smell of leather and furs was not very pleasant on this bright Whitsun evening, and after the sweet pure air around Sodbury, William Tyndale felt it oppressive, and left the little back room to station himself at the open door. There above his head the sign-board creaked lazily, as the soft May breeze moved it backwards and forwards. The sign was painted in flaming colours. On one side was a bullock with horns longer than the rest of the lean lank body; on the other, three small creatures which might have been any four-legged animals under the sun, but were really representations of a squirrel, a fox, and an ermine. This last was staring white, with tails painted all across its back, the tail in its legitimate position not being considered sufficiently distinctive to explain the creature's place in natural history.

Simon Bragge was a sharp-faced, keen little man, who had an eye to business, and considering that his mother's sister, Tebita Collet, had lived a spinster in a family like the Walshes as girl and woman for some twenty-eight years, he not unnaturally hoped that what savings she had might fall to him or to his only child Elfrida. To win Tebita's favour was Simon Bragge's aim: and when the pedlar James Wansey had delivered the celebrated letter, the composition of which had, as we know, fallen to William Tyndale's lot, he had with a knowing wink handed it to his wife, saying—

“We must e'en receive this priest and make him welcome. This is from my aunt, Tebita Collet.”

Mrs. Bragge was wholly unable to decipher the epistle, but she scornfully pointed to Tebita's mark, saying—

“Well, I do fain hope that our maiden will sign her name, and not be forced to set her hand to a blotted cross like this. Poor cretur!—a serving-woman in a country mansion can have no chance of learning or being a scholar.”

“No, nor some others who live in town,” Simon responded; “but I tell thee yon serving-woman has saved a potful of money, and mayhap a dip into it might not displease thee for Elfrida. Anyways, the good Father Tyndale is welcome.”

“Tyndale—William Tyndale—why you are gone stark mad, husband. The eyes of the great are on him, and for no good. He is as dangerous as a flask of that fear-some powder which blows poor creturs to morsels instead of letting 'em perish in the properest way with a sword cut or an honest twanging arrow. I can't abide these new fangle-dangles. Why can't folks be contented with the old ways? I want none of your priests who rave

out-o'-doors like that Tyndale did a year ago come Midsummer. Tebita may keep him to herself."

Nevertheless, when William Tyndale followed the letter in two days, and drew from his wallet a Whitsun offering from the Manor dairy in the shape of a round creamy cheese fresh from Tebita's hands, good Mistress Bragge was pacified.

The sacristan's little grave-eyed daughter Elfrida soon made friends with him. She was a child of scarcely ten years old, and yet had by heart the wonders of the great church hard by. She loved to sit there in the outer court while the service went on in the choir. She would haunt the side chapels, and would trot round with her father when he went to light or extinguish the tall candles. She would look up into the fretted roof, and watch the sunbeams striking athwart the gloom, coming in at the clere-story windows, and making a pathway of light to the floor. That pathway went up to heaven, where the saints and the Blessed Mother of the Lord lived! She wondered if she should ever reach that beautiful place. She had no one to ask about it—her mother was busy and fussy; and besides, her mother knew nothing about that pathway of light. She knew about the skins and the furs, and she could stitch them together so that no eyes, however sharp, could see the joins; but once when Elfrida asked her mother how she could get to the height of heaven, she had replied that a child like her must not talk of these things, but that when she went to confess to the priest by-and-by he would tell her. But, alas! when poor little Elfrida was shut up in the confession-box, and had to answer sharp and short a few questions touching matters she could not understand, she had no time to think how to frame her inquiries: for the old fat priest got over his part so fast, muttered some

words over her bowed head, and bade her make way for others.

Then there were the nuns at the Augustine convent—they were teaching her to read from a black-letter book, and to make attempts at writing, and to work fine needle-work for the altar frontals and curtains; but, alas! they knew but little themselves of the heavenward path, and they encouraged no questions from their little grave-eyed scholar.

When William Tyndale was standing by the door, escaping from the close atmosphere behind him, he felt his black gown pulled, and looking down, saw Elfrida.

“Father Tyndale,” she said, “take me forth with thee. Mother is donning her new garments, and father is busy, and they told me to wait an hour for them till they could walk abroad in the Cathedral pleasaunce. Do take me along with you.”

Tyndale let the child lead him by the hand, and smiling at her asked—

“Whither shall we go, little maid?”

“I would fain go into the church with thee, Father Tyndale. It is open till after vespers, and methinks there will be the bright beautiful path from the big western window. I would like you to see it.”

So they took their way to the church, meeting many newly baptized infants and adults, Whit-Sunday being the great day for baptism. But though there were still many people talking on the steps and in the yard, the church was almost empty. There were a few low murmurs from one of the side chapels, but no one was to be seen.

William Tyndale knelt devoutly, the child by his side, crossing herself and clasping her small hands.

When they rose she whispered—

“There, Father Tyndale, is the pathway. I always

think it comes straight from Paradise, and I know the blessed saints are there. Tell me how I can get there."

"Dear child," William Tyndale said, "by the grave and gate of death we pass up the shining pathway to Paradise, purified in the blood of Christ."

"Is He not there?" the child asked, pointing to the high altar. "Is He not there?"

"His presence is with His people, little maiden. He hath said: 'Lo, I am with you alway, even until the end of the world.'"

"I cannot understand, Father Tyndale; teach me."

"Little one," he said, "we are all learners—we are all as children at their tasks. It is a pathway up to God by His Son Jesus Christ; but I will not say it is always bright. Think much on Him, for He saith in His holy Gospel that the children must be suffered to come to Him."

"The priests read the holy Gospels," said little Elfrida, "but we cannot read them. My mother saith it is not meet for any but the priests and learned folk to read them."

"Aye, so they have said; but if thy mother will give leave, come with me to St. Augustine's Cross. I am about to speak there the words of the Lord in a tongue all present can understand."

"About the road to Heaven?" the little maiden asked.

"Aye, verily, for all who will walk therein," was the reply.

They left the church together, and were amongst the gay holiday-makers again. There was no Sabbath rest, as we in England now understand it. Young men and maidens were all disporting themselves, bands of music were playing, and there was dancing in a meadow below Brandon Hill. Punchinello was squeaking then very much in the same tones as he squeaks now. Pedlars were selling their wares, and jugglers and mountebanks were

performing their tricks. How little did that gay unthinking crowd thronging the Bristol thoroughfares dream that a man whose name was to come down to later times as the benefactor of their city, as of every other city in the realm, was amongst them.

William Tyndale had been in Bristol before, and a few recognised him as the priest who had been preaching at St. Augustine's Cross several times during the last year. But they had devoutly attended mass on this Whit-Sunday, confessing their sins and obtaining absolution in the previous two days. Those who went to even-song and vespers were of the higher class of merchants and tradesmen; the lower were free to make holiday as they listed. Some were in unusually good spirits, for they had paid little sums for "indulgences," and felt a great deal happier for the temporary quietus to an awakened conscience. Some had purchased freedom from a distasteful penance, or had been allowed to strike off a few prayers from the allotted portion, by the sacrifice of a few silver coins. A little unfair dealing in the markets, an angry blow in the heat of passion, a lie, an unrighteous or impure act—well! let them be confessed, and if there was money, let a balance be struck between the penitent and the priest: then the Whitsun mass might be duly celebrated, the Communion in one kind partaken of; and the penitent, absolved and lightened of a burden, might spend the rest of that day and many succeeding days as he listeth. We are compelled at this distance to look back on the state of society or of the Church in wide masses, extending over a broad area. But in that pleasure-loving crowd, keeping holiday on this great Church festival, there were doubtless many hidden ones whom God's eye saw, and heeded—many who, though seeing through a glass obscured and darkened by super-

stition, *did* discern the King in His beauty, heard His voice, and tried to struggle toward the light where He is revealed. To many hearts He was dear, and He was near them on that Whitsun evening with a message coming direct from Himself. As the mighty rushing wind shook that "room" long ago—as that fair white dove floated down for a few brief seconds in bodily shape centuries before—so was the Word of Life to quicken dead souls, and feed hungry souls, and warm and cheer and turn to God's truth many gathered round St. Augustine's Cross that evening.

Elfrida darted towards her father and mother, whom she caught sight of at their house door, evidently uneasy at her prolonged absence—her mother shading her eyes with her hand from the low western beams as she looked down the street, her father talking eagerly.

"The naughty chit!" Mistress Bragge exclaimed, "to put us in a pother. Come now and see the Moor who is swallowing knives and bending his back double on the Quay—that's better than moping in the church."

"Oh, mother, prythee let me hear Father Tyndale at the Cross. He is agoing to talk to the people there. Prythee let us *all* go, mother."

"I dare not, not I. Why last summer there was a rare fuss about——"

Mistress Bragge stopped, for William Tyndale was close at hand.

"I will take care of your little daughter an you trust her to me, good Mistress Bragge."

But Simon Bragge shook his head, and resisting the little pleading earnest face turned up to him, William Tyndale pursued his way.

The cross was raised on a plinth of some height, and set on a rising ground. Those who stood there were

visible at some distance. The light of evening lay upon the city, and all the windows looking westward in the Cathedral and churches were blazing in the red gold rays.

For a few minutes William Tyndale stood alone, his hands folded, his head raised, and his eyes taking in the scene before him. Sounds of merriment mingled with the murmur of the pleasure-seekers, children's voices, the striking of the clocks, and the chimes, which rung at this hour.

That figure on St. Augustine's Cross, bathed in the light, at last attracted some to pause and draw near. It was no unusual thing for members of religious orders to stand up in the public streets to preach, thus it caused no surprise in the minds of the good citizens that William Tyndale should stand there. He was recognised by a few, and the crowd thickened.

Presently a procession passed by. The Host was being borne from the dying bed of some citizens who had been called to the other life on this life-giving festival. William Tyndale waited till it had passed, kneeling and crossing himself, as did the most careless among the bystanders. The chaunt of the priests died away in the distance, and when out of hearing William Tyndale rose, and after the customary invocation he spoke—

“Tenderly beloved, hear ye the words of the Lord as they are written in the Holy Gospel of Saint Matthew.”

As the sonorous voice rang out the words in their own tongue, the people listened more attentively. Very few recognised them—how should they? They had never heard them in English before. All through the third chapter William Tyndale went, adding no word of his own, but trusting to the Spirit of God to bear the message straight to his hearers' hearts. He repeated the last words twice, and as he did so he looked up into

the summer sky as if perchance he might see there the white-winged dove descending—as if he might hear from heaven those words of majestic recognition—

“This is My deare Sonne, in whom is My delyte.”

Then he paused.

“What is it he sayth?” the listening people asked.

“Hush!” said a young man in a monk’s dress, “he doth but read from the Gospels in your own tongue.”

Presently the clear, distinct voice was heard again. This time it was the second chapter of the Acts of the Holy Apostles.

“Hearken, brethren,” he said, “hearken to the story of this great festival as told by St. Luke the physician—‘When the fyfthith day was come, they were all with one accorde gaddered togedden in one place. And sodenly there came a sounde from heven as it had been the comynge off a myghty wynde, and it filled all the house where they sate.’”

On to the end of this marvellous history, neither adding to nor taking from the inspired story, the great scholar went, not hastening nor faltering—slowly and surely, as one who delivers a great message. How the number of upturned faces increased—how they listened and drank it in, as children a story at their mother’s knee!

For a second time William Tyndale paused, and then his eyes fell upon a little earnest face in the crowd. His rare sweet smile broke over his face, and he said—

“Tenderly beloved, last time, a year ago on Midsummer Eve, I stood here and spake to you of many things. An you know, ye that know me, that I was sorely chastened for what I then said to you—convicted of what they say is a subverting of the Church. Methinks I spake with much heat, for my heart burned within me. This eventide I have sought and craved the

aid of the blessed Spirit to speak only such things as should please Him. Brethren, I would fain build you up in the knowledge of God's Holy Word. This which I have said to you now has been His Word, and His Word only. I add not much further, save a thought which came to me by the words of a little maiden, whose childish fancy has shown her, in the pathway of light, the sunbeams make right adown from the clerestory windows of yon stately church through dust and mists and gloom, the way to heaven. The child seeth in that golden pathway the road to the place where sitteth the blessed Mother of the Lord, the saints—aye, and the Lord Himself, greater than ten thousand times ten thousand saints and angels, and altogether lovely. This deare childe prayed me to show her the way—'if that be not it,' quoth she. I say to you, as to that child: the way is the way of holiness, the way is the path of the Holy-One. Seek Him; follow Him; and seeking and following ye shall find. For the blessed Spirit, whom to-day we call to mind, in His manifestation, sayth, 'Come; and let him that heareth saye also, Come; and let hym that is athyrste, come; and let whosoever will take of the water of lyfe *free*.' Aye, brethren beloved, it is *free*—there is no money and no coin of this realm needful; nay, it is a free gift, this lyfe which we have in His Son—follow after it, and ye will have found yon little maiden's pathway of light which shall lead you to the Holy City, where they sigh not nor sin not, but dwell in the presence of God."

He ceased speaking, and not a sound was heard in the crowd assembled as he raised his hands and solemnly pronounced the benediction in the English tongue.

"He is a wondrous man," some said as they turned away.

"He is a wondrous heretic," said another. "He has been before the Chancellor already, and he is forced to flee the country."

"He is on his way to London," said Simon Bragge to the last speaker. "So you are out in your reckoning, man. He goeth to the household of the Lord Bishop of London, bearing a letter of grace to Sir Harry Gilford, Comptroller of his Highness the King's household."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the man, "who believes an old wife's tale like that? Go home and tell it to thy portly dame, and see that she do not rate thee well for a deceiver."

Elfrida, who had coaxed her father to bring her to the preaching, now said—

"Let us tarry for Father Tyndale, father, prythee."

"Nay, nay, child; thy mother will scold me as it is for keeping thee abroad so late."

CHAPTER XIII.

ESCAPE.

WILLIAM TYNDALE'S words at the Cross of St. Augustine in Bristol had awoke in many hearts that mysterious yearning after God, and reconciliation with Him, which the Blessed Spirit often stirs within us in various ways, and under various circumstances.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and ye cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Several of the most earnest inquirers sought out William Tyndale at Simon Bragge's; and in the little back parlour behind the shop—business being slack owing to the holidays—Simon Bragge and his wife, and a few neighbours, were at leisure to hear the Word of

Life from those closely-written pages which the priest drew from his wallet, and which were more precious to him than silver and gold. He said but little by way of comment: so full, so easy to comprehend were the simple Gospel narratives; and he read them slowly, as we read to children.

At his feet sat the child Elfrida, drinking in the good news, as a flower drinks in the dew.

On the afternoon of the Thursday in Whitsun week, Elfrida was allowed by her mother, after many entreaties, to go abroad with William Tyndale. Trotting by his side, she followed him up the steep ascent now known as Park Street, then a grass-grown hill with fragments of limestone breaking it into little hollows, as seen on the Downs of the present day. These Downs are still the property of the Merchant Venturers, and now, as then, a source of health and recreation to the citizens of Bristol. The river flowing under the mighty St. Vincent's Rocks was nearly at full tide as William Tyndale stood on what is now called the Observatory Hill, and some sloops with russet-brown sails were coming proudly up the river to the Bristol Port. Little Elfrida gathered wild thyme and the small golden cistus which grew on the turf, while William Tyndale seated himself on a fragment of limestone-rock, and thought over his future. The prospect was not a cheerful one. All depended on the reception he might get from the Bishop of London and the father of Hubert Gilford. He held letters of introduction to both; but, in spite of Erasmus's assurance that Tonsall would give him bed and board and books, and help in his great work, he had his misgivings. Erasmus, he knew, could make an "elephant out of an ant, an so it pleased him."

If his great work were to prosper, all other consider-

ations were of small importance; but William Tyndale's human heart, capable of the deepest feelings of gratitude and attachment to those who befriended him, turned regretfully to the peaceful shelter of Sodbury Manor. He wondered how it fared with them all since he had parted from them. The child Joan, where was she? was she still at Inclyff, or had she returned to the Manor? He felt the interest of the shepherd in a sick lamb for her, and he dreaded lest the nervous sensitive girl should make shipwreck, as so many like her have done, from too much introspection, and living too much on feelings and fancies, instead of doing the work appointed by God as their daily duty. Karina Mountjoy, with her vigorous powerful character, was the best companion for Joan: and he determined, before he left Bristol the next day, to entrust to the pack-horse, which carried the post between Bristol and Yate and the neighbouring towns once a fortnight, some letters of inquiry to Mistress Mountjoy and Lady Walsh.

This meditation of Tyndale on these and various other subjects did not make him a particularly good caretaker of a child, and he was awakened to a sense of his responsibility by hearing a cry not far from him. He started to his feet, for surely it was little Elfrida's voice: but he could see nothing of her. The turf sloped down in several places below the level of the Down, and Elfrida, tempted by some flowers which grew on a plateau of grass about ten feet below, had strayed there to gather them. When William Tyndale hastened to the edge of the steep precipice some three or four hundred feet above the river, he saw to his horror Elfrida clinging to a hawthorn bush, and with one foot absolutely over the great gulf below her.

"Father Tyndale!" she cried, "oh! save me!"

Before Tyndale could reach the terrified child, a figure appeared a little to the right, and leaping down the smooth turf, had seized the child with a strong arm, and using his staff, with firm step brought Elfrida safe to William Tyndale's side.

"The Lord be praised!" he exclaimed. "I was wrong indeed to forget my precious charge:" and taking the child in his arms, he gave thanks in solemn words for her preservation.

"Father, I was so afeared," Elfrida said. "I saw a great light as I hung there, and I thought it was the pathway to God; then it all got dark, and I felt an arm seize me."

So engrossed was Tyndale with his recovered treasure that he had not recognised the child's deliverer. Looking up, as he was called by name, he saw his kinsman John Huchyns.

"You have done a brave and noble service to-day. I could not have leaped down with so sure a foot, nor held the child with as firm a grip. What brought you into these parts?"

"I am seeking a lost lamb," John Huchyns said. "Her ladyship of Castle Cranstone came two days ago and carried off Joan Walsh from our house at Inclyff. It was with her parents' consent, as a letter showed, writ by Mistress Mountjoy, but it was a mere subterfuge. News came to us from a lad hard by Castle Cranstone, that the poor child was heard weeping and wailing in a litter, and that, though the curtains were drawn round, he heard her plain enough say that she would not go to the Nunnery at Almondsbury—that she willed to go home, or back to Mistress Huchyns. The lad was known to us, as he had served in our stable, and he knew what store

we set on the poor maiden, and, moved by the sound of her piteous voice, he came right off with the news."

William Tyndale's brow grew dark.

"It is a plot," he said, "a vile plot. They fear that heresy having touched Joan by my means, that she may infect others. Ah! do they arrogantly imagine by thus wreaking their vengeance on a poor faint-hearted child that they will stay the Lord's hand? Nay, the bars shall be drawn back, and the light shall shine in the dark place, in spite of them. Her parents, what say they?" he continued.

"They are in slavish fear of that arrogant old dame at the Castle, who, it seems, vows to make Joan the heir of much wealth if she remain a faithful daughter of the Church. They say they feel certain no harm will come to the child. Sir John nevertheless rode forth to Castle Cranstone at once on receipt of my news. It was at the earnest prayer of Mistress Mountjoy that I came, to find out some trace of the poor little one; for she is almost as much of a babe as yon nursling, who is still shaking with her fright. Let me carry her to her mother, and she has one."

Elfrida trusted herself implicitly to John Huchyns's strong arm, and they turned towards Bristol, William Tyndale, asking,—

"Didst hear of Joan at Almondsbury?"

"Nay, and that brought me to Bristol, for it seemed likely that Joan might be at Westbury-on-the-Trym, where there is a convent of the Order of Saint Mary. I could gain no entrance at Almondsbury: but the brother who kept the gate declared to me that there had been no arrival since the maiden who had been turned mad by the evil teaching of one William Tyndale at St. Augustine's

Cross last year—‘a vile heretic,’ quoth the brother, ‘who will, ere long, meet his deserts.’”

“Aye, will he?” said Tyndale with a smile. “But can nought be done about the dear child?”

“I hardly see my way; for if they hold to it that the father and mother are not against her being in the Convent, how can I take her thence? I came off feeling it to be a goose-chase, but there is nought on this earth I would not do for the one who sent me on the quest.”

“The fair Karina, Mistress Mountjoy, seemeth to rule all hearts.”

“Yes,” John Huchyns said sadly. “Would that I could think that he to whom, as I believe, she has surrendered, were worthy of the prize. Ere many months are gone by, she will be the bride of Master Hubert Gilford, adrift on the open sea of that big London world, and we poor country folk will see her no more.”

He spoke bitterly, and the great sigh which followed the words made the child in his arms raise her little hand to his face as she whispered:—

“Father Tyndale saith, the pathway to God is not always bright and smooth.”

John Huchyns bent and kissed the little serious face as it lay on his shoulder, and said:—

“Thou art a child-comforter. Verily thou must give thy word never to play so near the edge of the rocks again.”

“It was to gather these flowers,” she said; and he saw that in one hand Elfrida still held the crushed bunch of milk-wort which had nearly proved so fatal to her.

“Whose child is she?”

“One Simon Bragge’s,” Tyndale answered, “nephew to the worthy Tebita Collet, at the Manor.”

“Ah! who would have dreamed that so fair a flower could have come from that rugged stock.”

As they neared Bristol, William Tyndale was recognised, and two priests stopped him close to the Castle gate. They did not speak in an unfriendly fashion, but they warned Tyndale that here in Bristol, as at Sodbury, sharp eyes were upon him, and counselled him to depart as quickly as might be.

"Brother Christopher of the Dominicans is to hold forth at the Cross this evening, and we know that he takes for his text, 'The soul-destroyer and his damnable doctrines:' so have a care, Father Tyndale. He hath the gift of the tongue, which will wag like any old wife's, or scold's that ever found herself in a duckpond. He will sway the folks with the heat of his discourse, and the fire thereof may scorch thee sorely."

"Thanks, good my brothers," was Tyndale's reply. "I am leaving the city to-morrow at dawn, to seek a larger and less kindly one perchance; but the time may come when Bristol shall mind me for my work's sake. Fare you well, good brothers."

"What did they say to you, Will?" asked John Huchyns.

"Nothing to much purpose—they told me what I knew before, that I must hasten to turn my back on Bristol, as on Gloucester. I am but served as those a hundred times greater than I have been served. But let us speak of Joan Walsh. We must make an effort, methinks, to find her. What say you, shall we walk to Westbury-on-the-Trym, and see if we can gather news? It goes to my heart to think of that child shut up in a convent to fast, pray, and meditate. Good things for the hardy and strong; but Joan is as a weak babe who must be fed with milk—the milk of the Word."

"Set me down, prythee, good gentleman," Elfrida said: "for if my mother sets eyes on me aloft in a stranger's

arms, she will think some evil has befallen me, and her heart will give those big jumps and throbs which the wise woman who lives by the Quay saith are signs of a disease. So I heard my father tell a neighbour one day."

"The little thoughtful maid!" John Huchyns said tenderly, gently setting Elfrida on her feet. "See now, what shall I buy thee at yon booth? Wouldst like that knight made of hard-bake, with his gilt helmet and shield, or yon puppet with the strings? Say, choose some toy."

Elfrida's eyes brightened.

"I would like the knight," she said, "and that little lanthorn to hang by my bed—if mother will trim it for me; for I am abed so long in the dark on winter nights."

John Huchyns soon made little Elfrida the happy possessor of knight and lanthorn, which she eagerly displayed to her mother, who was standing by the shop door with a customer, her face redder than usual, and her large fat form vibrating with anger, which might well bring on the "jumps and throbs" at the heart, of which her little daughter had spoken.

"A cat's skin!—it's well my good man is not by, to throw back the words in your teeth. A cat's skin!—this cuff and collar of real squirrel, bought last summer from a merchant who hadn't an English word to his tongue!"

"Most like, most like," laughed the customer, a thin woman, who was all corners, where Mistress Bragge was all cushions. "Most like he talked gibberish, and had his bag stuffed with a goodly lot of tabby-skins; but though he saw *your* money, good Mistress Bragge, you won't see *mine*—and so good-day."

"The impudent, crane-necked jade!" Mistress Bragge exclaimed; and then catching sight of her little daughter and William Tyndale, the stream of her wrath was directed towards them.

"For shame on you to keep a body on tenter-hooks, Father Tyndale; a poor return for bed and board."

"Nay, mother, don't be angered; we sat down on the top of the St. Vincent's Rocks," said little Elfrida.

"I never heard the like! A fearsome place. I never was there but twice in my life, and then I was as giddy as a gander. I marvel that you have come home to tell the tale."

"It is a marvel and a thanksgiving too," said William Tyndale. "The little maiden strayed to gather flowers, and was near the edge of the precipice, when my kinsman here, Master Huchyns-Tyndale, rescued her from her peril."

Mistress Bragge put her hand to her side, and retreated to the back parlour, dragging Elfrida after her, and indulging in a long string of cries and lamentations.

Simon Bragge's appearance was welcome to the two men who stood by the door; and on his inquiring what was the matter he did not seem so greatly moved as he ought to have been.

"She is given to crying fits," he said, "when overset by aught. Hush, hush," he added, as he disappeared, "screech not like a pig at the slaughter. The neighbours will be in on thee."

"Oh! I know well enow I may be scouted by a scarecrow about tabby-skins, and have my blessed child in danger of her precious life, and you'll not care. I never did hold with yon priest, and he may make way for his betters as soon as he pleases."

"Hush now, hush!" was the poor sacristan's entreaty, though relieved to see a smile on William Tyndale's face as he returned to the door. "Ye must come in and take a bite and sup, good gentlemen," he said. "My mistress hath been chafed by sundry things, and she

hath a disease of the heart, which Gammer Woollcott saith may any day lay her in the grave, and send her soul to purgatory. I say nought, but I have saved a few pence that I may, after her burial, pay right away for masses to be said to ease her pains. Methinks she will have sore need of 'em, poor cretur."

This very prosaic and strange way of regarding his wife's illness of body and soul was enough to provoke a smile, and John Huchyns turned away to conceal his amusement. William Tyndale, however, did not laugh any more, but said gravely,—

"I am leaving Bristol to-morrow at dawn, and I care not to leave your roof with no word of warning to those who need it. The tongue is an unruly member, and boasteth great things. Your good wife would do well to take heed thereto."

Whereupon William Tyndale betook himself to the back parlour, while John Huchyns accepted Simon Bragge's offer to see the church; and then, heedless of the cries and tears, which gradually subsided, he read to her, in very slow, measured accents, as was his wont, from the Epistle of St. James, beginning at the second chapter:

"Beholde howe gret a thyng a litill fyre kynddleth, and the tonge is fyre, and worlde of wickednes. So is the tonge set among our members that it defileth the whole body and setteth a fyre all that we have off nature and is its silfe set a fyre even off hell."

Whether she willed or not, Mistress Bragge was obliged to listen. A dim idea that these words described *her* and referred to *her* dawned on her. By the time the clear, slow voice had reached the words—

"The fruite of rightewesnes is sown in peace of them that kepe peace"—the storm in poor Mistress Bragge's heart had subsided, and a few quiet tears fell on Elfrida's

golden hair as she leaned in rapt attention against her mother's breast.

"Aye for sure," she gasped, "I never heard the like! Is that the Word of God, say you? It's as though he who wrote knew Mistress Pullen next door, who is always rating and wrangling."

William Tyndale smiled as he said,—

"Aye, Mistress Bragge, the words are the words of One who doth know Mistress Pullen—and Mistress Bragge also right well, and this dear childe," he added, as he replaced the manuscript in his wallet, and, as was his custom, silently prayed that the seed sown might spring up and bear fruit.

Thus to bring the Word of God *home* to the life of the people of England renders the value of William Tyndale's work so immeasurably above our conceptions. For the open Word of God was the great weapon wherewith to wage warfare against the religion which hitherto had been enshrined in the altars as a thing apart and sacred—enclosed within "narrowing nunnery walls"—and spoken of with awestruck whispers in the box of the confessor. The religion thus taught was reserved for the great exigencies of life and death—in the seven sacraments—whereby the people from afar recognised its power. But in the everyday details of the everyday life of men and women, in small as in great matters, the written Word was now to show religion to be a personal possession. It was to be as the angel coming down to the waters of healing, to point to a cure for, and a prevention against, sins of tongue, sins of heart as well as sins of life—to sweeten the nether springs in the innermost soul which had been poisoned by the bitterness of hatred, anger, or jealousy.

"I wish I could hear more on't," poor Mistress Bragge

exclaimed. "I am a dull scholar, but I can take in the meaning of those words. While Father Christopher is talking I feel as if it was like the hum of a bumble-bee, and can't follow him one bit. I would I could have the Word in English, to pick out a bit here and a bit there, and piece 'em together just as you piece the skins of the—the—squirrel."

The word brought back the memory of the old insult, and Mistress Bragge would have broken out again, had not William Tyndale said,—

"Be patient, Mistress Bragge, and before many years have rolled by you shall have the Holy Gospels and Epistles printed in your own language: and when you turn over the leaves of the book you'll call to mind perchance, William Tyndale, and pray that he may find the pathway to glory of which this little maid has spoken so prettily."

The two kinsmen, John Huchyns and William Tyndale, left Bristol in the early morning, passing through the Castle gate, which was opened for them by the sleepy porter, and then away over the rugged Downs towards Westbury-on-Trym.

They tarried at a church, or rather small wayside chapel, just without the gates, and William Tyndale and his companion knelt for some time, Tyndale saying the office for the hour, John Huchyns thinking of Karina and little Joan, and sending up a voiceless prayer from time to time that he might take back to the Manor the tidings of her, which Karina so earnestly desired. John Huchyns was in that stage of love when a hungry desire to serve the beloved one absorbs every other feeling. "At least I would shed my blood for her, and gladly," he was saying, as Tyndale rose from his knees. They

pursued their way across the uneven surface of the wide-spreading common. Beyond them lay the mouth of the Channel, and the outline of the Welsh coast was seen through the mists of the morning. Larks sang merrily overhead, and tiny blossoms of the daisy and golden cistus jewelled the turf under their feet. As the day grew older, they passed several strings of pack-horses, and a traveller here and there mounted on a stout cob, his saddle-bows filled with country produce.

Large pails of Westbury milk were borne on the yoke by stout men and women: and a dozen horsemen, bearing the badge of a noble house in the neighbourhood, trotted swiftly past the two pedestrians. Westbury Church came in sight, and William Tyndale touched John Huchyns' sleeve.

"Yon church was once served by that great man whose name ought to be had in reverence, John Wycliffe."

"Ay, verily," John Huchyns said, starting like one suddenly awakened from sleep. "It is a goodly church, and how fair the valley where it stands, girdled by yon wooded heights. What will you say at the Nunnery gate? for you must be spokesman, William. Methinks I am getting much an hungered. Will they offer us to break our fast, think you?"

"Not they; my ecclesiastic's dress may win me an entrance, but not to meat. See, I carry my food in a small compass," and William Tyndale took from his knapsack a bit of a brown loaf and began to eat it, stooping down at a little rill by the roadside to gather some cresses as a relish.

"I must have a fuller stomach than thine, good William," John Huchyns said. "I'm a poor faster in Lent, and now at Whitsun there is no call to fast. Shall we not turn into this hostelry and call for a meal?"

"An thy stomach needs it, do so and welcome. I am satisfied—though a draught of new milk would not come amiss."

John Huchyns' views were for a much more substantial repast, and he did ample justice to the great joint of beef, and despatched a good-sized roll, and drank a draught of ale for the good of the house.

William Tyndale busied himself with his manuscript, and when his companion was ready, they inquired the way to the Convent, of a countryman, who was cutting off huge square bits of cheese with his knife, and crowding them into his capacious mouth alternately with wedges of bread. As soon as he could articulate, he said,—

"Ye have passed your mark, my masters; the Convent is higher up the hill. You'll not find an open door there," he said with a wide grin. "Mayhap the worshipful father may be let in, but not you, good sir," adding in a lower voice, "my sister's girl was shut up there, and died afore they'd let her father set foot in the place. It is a very holy place, that Convent of Westbury."

The two men turned up to the right as they were directed, and came to the outer gate of the Convent. A horn hung there, and John Huchyns, raising it to his mouth, blew a loud call. As there was no answer, he repeated it three times, and then a sound of light footsteps was heard on the paved pathway, and a small treble voice asked,—

"Who goes there?"

"Can we see the Mother Superior of the Convent?"

Again the voice asked at the grating,—

"Who goes there?"

"One William Tyndale, a fully consecrated priest of the Holy Catholic Church," was the answer, "who craves

permission to see the Mother of this Convent. Methinks it is an off-shoot of the Abbey at Almondsbury."

There was no answer to this, but the patter of the same light footsteps was heard again, and silence followed for some two or three minutes.

"Left out in the cold, like whipped curs," said John Huchyns laughing. "We'll gain no entrance here, depend on't."

But after five minutes had passed, steps were heard once more within, the lock was turned, bars withdrawn, and the heavy gate thrown back.

CHAPTER XIV.

TERRORS BY NIGHT.

AN old nun, not fully professed, and holding a menial office in the Convent, stood behind the door, and as she closed it and locked it, she invited the two travellers to advance, more by signs than by words.

"We would see the Mother of this Convent," William Tyndale said, "touching a matter on which we seek information."

The sister nodded, but did not speak. Presently they reached the building itself—a low, irregular house with pointed gables, and at the east end a chapel with long lancet windows, from which, standing in the porch, the sound of voices raised in low, sweet strains, could be heard. It was all very peaceful and quiet. The garden was large and well kept, and there were some wide-spreading cedars, shading an expanse of emerald turf. Except for the sense of *enforced* confinement within those walls, it might have appeared a peaceful asylum from the cares and troubles of the outside world. But herein

lies the danger and the pain of any coercion in religious life. The sense of imprisonment is heavier than iron bands to many free spirits, who have pined in convents, and have felt the accustomed round of prayers and meditation, of penance and fast, of solitude and silence, intolerable—so intolerable that the finer sensibilities have been blunted, and the unwilling captive has become a mere machine, wound up to the performance of certain duties, and incapable of any independent act or thought—while within, there was a flood of bitterness and sin which can find no healing. But in looking back on the conventual life of those times, which was standing on the very brink of dissolution, we must be careful to remember that in all systems, however bad, there are those who stand out good in spite of them. When Henry VIII. with the besom of destruction swept the convents of his kingdom, and turned the inhabitants out into the world, homeless and helpless, the innocent suffered with the guilty. Many a noble woman who had been at the head of a convent, and had faithfully performed her duty there,—many a sensitive and pure-minded nun, who had lived near to God—were turned adrift: and who can wonder that their cry was a pitiful one, and that it entered into the ears of the loving God and Father of us all. The *system* was evil, and we who see it in the light of the Word of God may well be full of sympathy and pity, and look to ourselves that we walk as children of light.

The man who was to do more for England than the despotic King, whose covetous hand was so soon to be laid on the revenues of Almondsbury and Westbury, stood now awaiting his interview with the Mother Superior of the Convent with a quiet dignity which was his chief characteristic.

The door of the house was opened from the inside, and another sister, closely veiled, pointed to the right, where John Huchyns was bidden to enter, and the door shut on him. William Tyndale was ushered into the room on the left. The door closed on him also, but he was not left alone for more than a moment. A heavy curtain of tapestry hanging over a low entrance cut out of the thick wall, was pushed aside, and the Mother Superior stood before him. She was a tall, commanding-looking woman, with what we should call a sensible and bright face. Her long black dress became her well, and the close white cap or hood, with the sweeping veil which floated over her sloping shoulders gave her a queen-like appearance. She was a very different woman to Lady Cranstone, and just one of those whom no dogmatic narrow creed could bind hand and foot. She knelt in acknowledgment of William Tyndale's office, and he pronounced over her the accustomed benediction. Then he remained standing, till, having seated herself in a high-backed carved oak chair, she motioned to him to take the other.

"I came, Madame, to inquire if perchance you know aught of Joan Walsh, the daughter of Sir John Walsh, of Sodbury Manor?"

"Yes, verily, I know of her. She was committed to my care by the Lady Cranstone and her confessor. The child needed spiritual direction and discipline. These she is to have here, and certain heretical notions have to be dispelled."

She looked steadfastly at William Tyndale as she spoke.

"May I beg leave to see her?" he asked.

"Nay, I cannot grant that request. I will do my endeavour to soften the requisite discipline. Indeed

we have relaxed the rigour in her case, for she is but weakly."

"So weakly," was the reply, "that but a little would overset the much-taxed brain. She needeth home and freedom."

"Methinks she hath had too much of the latter; and if I know rightly, too much of learning to weary her brain. She is here with the full consent of her parents, and the wealthy lady who committed her to us is her godmother, and intendeth to make her her heir, failing issue of her own."

"Poor little Joan!" William Tyndale said. "Methinks she is heir to no earthly inheritance."

"That may be true, but we must do our part to fit her for the heavenly. She is something contumacious, though so gentle and weakly. She bore about with her a tattered leaf of writing containing the First Epistle of the Holy Apostle St. John in English—writ by your hand, or copied therefrom. The only scene of positive resistance I have had, was when I rebuked her for sewing it up in her kirtle, but she surrendered at last."

"Ah! Madame, you know not what you did. Have you never heard that the entrance of His Word giveth light and understanding to the simple?"

"Nay, good Father, I must not engage in a war of words: else I could say that the Church is appointed to keep that Word pure and undefiled, and as her children can bear it, so do her priests dispense it—here a little, there a little—now a crumb, then a larger portion."

"And I say to you, Madame, that until the Word of God is in the hands of the people of this nation in their own tongue, there will be no safety. Methinks there is the first 'soundings in the tops of the trees' of a great storm which will sweep away, perchance, thrones and

principalities, and shake the foundations of the Church to her centre, but the Word of God shall endure for ever. May He show you of His way, and give you His peace: so I pray Him. Since I may not see the child Joan, say to her that I commend her to God's holy keeping, and pray her to possess her soul in patience. And I thank you, Madame, for your courtesy whereby you have enabled me to let those who love her know where she is hidden."

"Her parents know—Father Francis assured me thereof."

William Tyndale shook his head.

"They knew nothing, save that three days ago she had been taken against her will from Cranstone Castle."

A strange light came into the Mother Superior's eyes, and her lips moved, but no words were audible.

William Tyndale, bowing low, left her: John Huchyns, who had grown weary of his confinement, was set free by the same silent sister who had locked him up: and the two men walked away. Outside the gate they parted, John Huchyns retracing his steps towards Bristol, William Tyndale turning sharp off to a crossroad, whereby he hoped to reach Bath by sundown.

The Mother Superior of the Convent stood for a few moments where William Tyndale had left her. Then she clasped her hands and exclaimed:—

"That poor tattered paper, the sick child's treasure—what doth it say? So much that cometh to my soul with power. Is it verily a heinous sin to read it? Can it be a sin, when it is the word of the Gospel by which we hope for pardon? If it be in the tongue we spake at our mother's knee, doth that create a sin? Methinks such words as I read in that sad child's prized manuscript come with a power I never felt when read in the Latin

tongue. How dare I even think this—how set at naught the will of His Holiness, who has decreed that only deepest penitence and long penance can atone for heresy, which this is counted? I dare not think of it, but I will look well after the sick child—she shall have no more night vigils in the chapel before the altar: it is too great a strain, whatever Father Francis may prescribe. And I will remit somewhat of the strict discipline which her confessor thinks necessary. I will see him thereon before night. Hark, they are speaking within.”

The Mother lifted the curtain, and was met by one of the sisters.

“Haste, Mother, haste; the poor maid is seized with one of her fits—she is screaming amain, and calling for one named Karina to keep her from the fire. Prythee come to quiet her. She fell into a doze while kneeling in her cell, and awoke in this panic. Oh! hark!”

Joan’s cries were now heard, with sobbing entreaty for Karina, for her mother, for Father Tyndale, to save her. She was suffering from the same nervous debility and hysteria which her visit to Inclyff had checked. It had now returned with full force. Scanty food, and long watches of vigils and prayers, with elaborate private exhortations from the confessor of the novices, had done their work. Crimson spots burned on her cheek, her eyes were unnaturally bright, and on the Mother appearing she stretched out her arms, crying, “Save me from the fire!” and fell senseless to the ground.

Poor little Joan! one of many thousands who have fallen victims to a bigoted and cruel creed, which has, however impossible it may seem, marched its votaries under the banner of the All-loving and merciful Saviour, believing that by fire and sword, by bitter mockings and scourgings, by bonds and imprisonments, the wandering

heretics were to be reclaimed, or sacrificed for the welfare of the Catholic Church.

But the night was far spent, the day was at hand, and the lonely and suspected priest who was walking away from Westbury, conning from time to time his precious manuscript as he went, was to raise the Banner of the Truth which should herald the advance of liberty and light.

John Huchyns returned to Simon Bragge's to rest before mounting his horse, which he had put up at an inn near Redclyffe Street. He had at any rate some news to take to Karina, and he knew it would be a satisfaction to her to hear that Joan was absolutely at the Westbury Convent, and he hoped to reach Sodbury Manor before nightfall.

Little Elfrida had just come in from school at St. Augustine's Nunnery when he reached the door. Her face clouded over with disappointment as she said,—

"You are come alone, Master Huchyns; will the Father never return?"

"Nay, I hope not," said a voice within; "there's been too many here this morning inquiring for him, and he is like to bring trouble to my house. I want no more of him."

"Oh! mother, say not so," Elfrida cried. "Think of the brave words he read yester even, and think of what you said then."

"Peace, child, nor worrit me with thy talk—I am in no mood for it. Our dinner is over, Master Huchyns, but step in and take some pasty and ale."

"Nay, thanks, good Mistress Bragge, I must away, for I have tidings to bear to Sodbury. Can I bear aught for you to the good Mistress Tebita Collet?"

Mistress Bragge paused and considered. She remembered her husband's remark about the "pot of money," and the dip which she might hope to make therein for Elfrida's benefit. There was a collar of rabbit-skins, so like squirrel that only a professional eye could detect that it was not the costlier fur. There was one suspiciously bare place in it, suggestive of a moth past or present, but Mistress Bragge determined that she would send her aunt this valuable gift, which, with some flourish and parading of her generosity, she prepared to do.

"Did you say that there had been inquiries here to-day for my kinsman, William Tyndale?"

"Aye, one was a priest with his face as long as the ladle of a pap-spoon; he boded no good, I'll warrant. I didn't like the look of him—he seemed to think Father Tyndale was hidden under the skins; he peered and peeped like a weasel from its hole."

"Father Francis," John Huchyns thought, but he held his peace, and soon after he had bid good-bye to his hostess, tucked the fur cape into a safe place in the saddle-bags, and was riding off towards Sodbury at a quick trot.

Our forefathers both in town and country held fast to the maxim that "early to bed and early to rise" was the sure road to health, riches, and wisdom. The children of Elfrida's age were always despatched to bed while the last rays of the sun was gilding the towers of the churches, and making the vanes gleam like stars. Elfrida was never unwilling to retire to her little chamber high in the pointed roof above the furrier's shop. The sign, with its curious specimens of natural history, creaked and sighed just below it, and the child rather liked the sound as a lullaby. It was the night after

John Huchyns's departure, when she had repeated her prescribed number of Aves and Paternosters, and received her stout mother's good-night kiss long before the street below was quiet. Her mother's heavy footfall, growing fainter and fainter as she descended the stairs, had scarcely ceased, when Elfrida sprang out of her little truckle bed, and went to the window to look up at that square bit of blue sky over which flocks of gold-coloured clouds were passing, tinged here and there with a deep red, and taking every conceivable form of grace and loveliness.

"The golden pathway," whispered the child low to herself. "Sure the pathway must lead up there to the gates of heaven. Father Tyndale said it was rough, but that the Lord would help little tender feet to tread it, and never leave them, never. I would fain mount up thither—none would speak loud and sharp there—none would vex another—none would——"

Elfrida stopped and looked round. Surely there was the sound of a sigh very near. Yes, and there was moving—some one moving. There was a deep cupboard in Elfrida's room, where a number of odds and ends were stored, and the door of this cupboard moved slightly. Elfrida was running to the top of the stairs to call her mother, when a poor wan face looked out of the hiding-place, and a voice said,—

"Prythee do not call or scream. I am only Joan Walsh. I have been in prison, shut up; oh, it was fearsome dark—so dark. I could not feel the shining of the Light that lighteth every man—and last night I saw, oh! a fearsome, gruesome vision."

The child gazed with parted lips at the apparition before her, and yet with wonderful presence of mind she did not scream.

"Tebita Collet lives at home—*my home* at Chipping Sodbury with my mother. I had heard of this place in Redclyffe Street, and so I came straight off here. See," and she bared her little wasted arm, "see, there are the marks of the iron bars I squeezed through. I think one arm is broken, it pains so, and I cannot lift it; but I am free—free. I should have died mad if I had been forced to pass one more vigil alone in the chapel. Oh!" and she covered her face with her hands, "oh! shut it out—shut out what I saw!"

"Lie down on my bed, an it please you," said Elfrida, helping poor Joan to disentangle herself from the tattered robe which she had worn in her flight. "Lie down, and I will call my mother."

"Not yet: lie down by me."

"But you are hungry," Elfrida said.

"No, only thirsty—burning thirsty."

"I will fetch some water from below, and mother will know best what to do."

Joan was too weak to resist, and little Elfrida's naked feet pattered down the stairs. Her mother was gone for a gossip to her neighbour's, the same woman whom she thought ought to profit from St. James's Epistle. Simon Bragge was at church, looking after the candles and other matters connected with his office. So all was quiet in the house. Elfrida took up a flagon of water and a cake lying on the board which had been left from supper, and remounted the stairs. Joan drank eagerly from the flagon till scarcely a drop remained. Then the child, who had lost all fear in pity, asked,—

"How came you here, Mistress Joan?"

"I got away from the prison before dawn this morning. I hid in a hole in the common for a little. I think I slept, for when I began to flee towards the city it was

afternoon. I met a kindly countrywoman who was bearing eggs and sweet flowers into the city. I passed the gate with her, and asked the way to one Master Bragge's. She pointed me aright, and I ran on here. No one was in the shop. I knew by the sign it was right, for Tebita hath often told me of the grand picture of the beasts. Then I fled upstairs, and no one saw me, and I hid in that cupboard. I thought they might still come after me and take me back. Oh, do not let them take me back, child. Tell me about the path you were talking about—a golden pathway, which leadeth to the gates of heaven. But there are the horrible fires of purgatory first! The priest at the Convent told me I should have hundreds of years amidst the flames because I had hid the precious Gospel in my bosom. Then he said perchance if I did penance at midnight in the chapel, and wore next my skin a prickly shift, and told a fourfold quantity of Aves, I might get some years annulled. I am perplexed sore at the thought, so sore, and I have a pain in my temples as if my head would burst; it is like a sharp knife piercing through it. Oh! I want Karina and mother. Why did mother send me to the Lady Cranstone? I was so happy at Inclyff. All my head-pains left me, and then they came with that long train and bore me off. See, who is that in the corner?—a tall black figure. See,” and Joan started up.

“It is no figure,” said little Elfrida; “it is but one of father's black robes hung on a peg. He hath worn a new one for Whitsuntide.”

Then Joan, exhausted, said no more.

“If she is in the way,” the child thought, “it is forsooth rough for her tender feet.”

She lay beside the poor stricken girl, one little hand placed tenderly on the burning forehead.

Presently, hearing her mother's voice below, Elfrida slipped from the bed and ran downstairs.

"Mother," she said, "there is a poor mad girl in my bed—Mistress Joan Walsh. She saith she hath run away from a Convent, and would fain go home—she prays to be taken home."

"Here's a pretty fuss!" exclaimed Mistress Bragge. "Simon, Simon, that aunt of thine will bring the house about thy ears. First one suspect person, now a runaway girl. How do we know the girl is Mistress Joan Walsh?"

"I shall know," said Simon, "for I saw the two maidens at Yate Fair last fall, when Dame Walsh bought the real ermine collar and lining for the riding-suit."

Mistress Bragge stumped up the stairs once more, panting and puffing, her husband following with his little trembling girl in his arms.

Joan lay in a stupor now, the exhaustion of mind and body was complete.

"Ay, verily," Simon Bragge said, "it is Sir John Walsh's daughter. I mind how one was big and rosy, the other like a snowdrop in the woods in spring;" and Simon sighed, for he was of a romantic turn of mind.

"Snowdrop! fiddlesticks with your folly. The question is what to do with her. I don't want to be suspected, and my trade ruined. She must be got back."

"She would die on the road," Simon said quickly. "We must send a message to apprise her friends. Pity 'tis Master John Huchyns has started. Methinks *I* will go myself to Sodbury. Master Pearson can take the chief place to-morrow in the church. It is only a low mass, and no great need of me. I'll start at dawn. I would start at once, but that I fear robbers and cut-purses, of which I hear a goodly number are abroad after Whitsun holidays."

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“Keep thy going secret then,” said his wife, “and see that Sir John disburse thee for thy pains. We have nought to spare for crazy maids. Wilt take Brown Bess from the ‘Three Kings?’”

“Aye, but wife, how hard she breathes. Methinks we should have a leech.”

“Nay, I’ll call in the old grandam from over the way, whose potions have done me good service. I must straiten the bed a bit, and thou, Elfrida, must go down to my bed. Thy father may sleep on the settle, to be ready for a start at dawn.”

But Elfrida prayed to stay, and Joan, opening her heavy eyes, stretched out a feeble hand to her.

Then Elfrida took up her old position on the bed, and lay down by her side. This seemed to comfort her, and Mistress Bragge left them while she went to summon the old woman to give her opinion of the case.

Joan Walsh was on the brink of brain fever: and this was the work of the Lady of Cranstone Castle and her confessor!

Take this poor tender child’s condition, with her overtaxed strength of mind and body, her diseased imagination, and her eager longings after light and knowledge which the words of her tutor and his teaching had awakened, now treated as a heinous sin, and punished with a high hand—take her as an instance, and say whether, whatever individual exceptions may be made, the system which bore this fruit was not rotten to the core? And say also, can we think too highly or too gratefully of the man who boldly and fearlessly pursued his work, determined to show the people of England the Word of God—that Word which giveth understanding to the simple, and has power to pull down the strongholds of ignorance and misery?

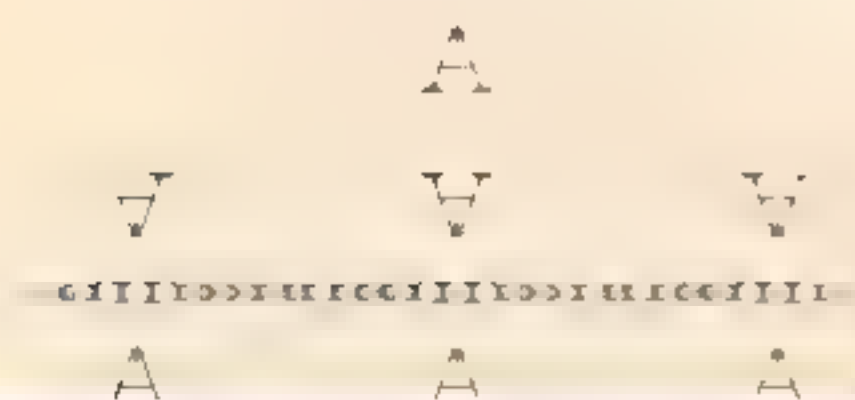
A selfish, pleasure-loving king might destroy monasteries, sweep out convents, and seize their goods and lands. But of what avail? The spring must be healed before the waters are sweet. A ruthless deed of destruction would never reform abuses. The Balm was in Gilead for mistaken though noble women like the Mother Superior of Westbury Convent, and needed by her as much as by little sick and weary Joan Walsh. It is not too much to say that William Tyndale was to lead them, and thousands like them, to the Great Physician by the story of Redeeming Love, without money and without price, told in the familiar language which had been the first to fall on their ears in infancy from a mother's lips in some happy earthly home, and not gabbled over in a foreign tongue which not one in a thousand could understand.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SILENT HIGHWAY.

"TIME stays—*we* go!" is the burden of an old French song; and the same words may not inaptly be addressed to the broad, ever-flowing river called the "Silent Highway of Old London," which, though always true to its wonted ebb and flow, remains in the same likeness to-day as yesterday, and may be said to stay while men and women who live by its banks, or skim its surface in various crafts, go. Go, to return no more! They go, and are followed by another generation, who in their turn vanish. Yes! the river stays, and *we* go. Customs change, but the river changes not.

At one time of its history there are gaily dressed barges floating on its surface, with silken curtains fluttering



in the breeze. These were the barges of the great and noble, who lived in the handsome palatial houses which skirted the strand. Every house had its stairway, and its staff of watermen, wearing the badge of their masters. Ladies in all the highest fashion of the time were escorted to the barges by gorgeously-dressed gentlemen with curled locks and velvet suits slashed with gold lace, and round hats bearing a heavy burden of plumes and feathers.

There were minstrels attached to the barges with lute and viol; there were sounds of singing and merriment as they floated away towards Greenwich or Richmond, and passed, perhaps, in the summer afternoon, groups of young citizens come out to try their strength at water-quintain hard by one of the bridges, on which crowds would collect to cheer the winners of the match. Southwark gardens with its bear-bating was a favourite resort; and we know that Queen Elizabeth, a few years later than this year of which we write, took the French Ambassador to the bear-gardens at Southwark, that he "might see with his own eyes the great courage of English bull-dogs."

So much for the pleasure-seekers of the Silent Highway. There were the business people too, in countless wherries and traffic-boats; for the river was the great medium of commercial transit in those days of narrow streets, choked often with dirt and mire, and rendered all but impassable for man and beast. Many a heavy burden did the jolly watermen row up the Thames, keeping time with their oars to the "Heave ho! and rumbelow," the song which answered to the more refined and poetic strain of the Venetian gondolier.

Business and pleasure found a place on the Silent Highway, and so did sorrow and despair. How many passed up the stream to the gloomy portals of the Tower,

leaving hope and home behind them for ever. How many broken hearts followed in their wake—broken hearts like Margaret Roper's, as she heard the splash of the water at the prow of the barge, and knew that she was going to bid her father a last farewell.

At this very time—this June of 1523—the selfish tyrant who, in after years, failing to bend Sir Thomas More to his will, forgot all the service of past years, and sacrificed him to his pleasure, was already turning over in his mind plans whereby he could rid himself of his lawful wife. But he was cautious now, and masked his intentions so cunningly that very few guessed them, and professed only to see in him a scrupulous son of the Church, who wished to redress the wrong of past years by putting away his brother's widow. The Duke of Buckingham had already fallen a victim to the spite of the lofty Cardinal, whose dignity he had insulted. The Queen Katherine had taken the first step towards her own downfall by denouncing Wolsey's conduct to the king, and thus provoking his enmity against herself.

The bright Midsummer weather was reigning supreme when William Tyndale appeared at Sir Harry Gilford's house in the Strand, and presenting his letter from his son and Sir John Walsh, demanded admission of the porter.

"It is an ill-chosen time," said a man bearing the badge of the Gilfords on his sleeve, as the priest accosted him at the entrance of the large hall. "Sir Harry Gilford is embarking to-morrow from Whitehall to Greenwich Palace, where the King and Queen resort to meet the Emperor Charles V., who cometh to visit his aunt—the Queen's Highness."

"This letter of Master Hubert Gilford will ensure me bed and board, methinks."

"Aye, it may be so; it is ill luck that Master Amyas

Gilford is abroad. He hath gone on some mission to the cloth-weavers of Flanders. It is like enough he may not return afore Yule-tide."

"Sir Harry Gilford lives chiefly with the Court, then?" Tyndale asked.

"Most times he does, for being Master of the Revels, he is little here, save in seasons of fasting—Lent, Advent, and the like."

Then the porter called to a man who was making his way through a mixed crowd in the hall. This man was in charge of the household during the absence of the eldest son and the master himself. He was jingling some keys, and close by him was one of those jesters, to be found in all gentlemen's houses of olden times, in motley garb of yellow, red, and black, who cracked feeble jokes for the amusement of the family, and affected to be half-witted.

The time for the evening meal drew near, and there were a good many hangers-on in Sir Harry Gilford's hall, although it was of modest proportions in comparison with the neighbouring stately palaces, which varied in size and grandeur from the Savoy, York House, and Durham House, to less pretentious buildings below Worcester House.

Many gentlemen about the Court had tiers or suites of rooms in the Strand buildings, as they were handy for the river, and the Tower, Whitehall, Westminster, Greenwich, and Richmond could be easily reached by a barge when necessary.

"A letter of commendation!" said the gentleman of the keys. "Ah! good father, this hall is not big enough to hold all that are received by Sir Harry Gilford. Sir John Walsh, say you, and Master Hubert Gilford?"

Here the jester pulled the custodian's sleeve:—

"You should have put the last first—he is my brother, he ranks before the knight."

"Thy brother? Nay, one of a sort is enough!" was the retort.

"Nay, that cannot be. I am a fool, and Hubert Gilford is a fool, and half the world are all cousins german."

Meanwhile the custodian of Sir Harry Gilford's goods and chattels, cellar and pantry, cut the silken cord which bound the letters, and calling the chaplain from the board where he was eagerly debating with a Dominican friar on some point which seemed interesting only to themselves, he said,—

"I am a fair scholar when not hastened, but a poor one when caught in a flurry; so read what saith the worthy knight."

The chaplain hummed and cleared his throat, held the letter very close to his little beads of eyes, and certainly for a man of letters did not make out the contents very easily. However, it sufficed to prove William Tyndale no impostor, and Master Hubert's effusion, which might be of a more private nature, was consigned with Sir John Walsh's and several other documents to a leathern wallet, to be taken to the palace by a trusty messenger.

Meanwhile Tyndale was bidden to sit down at the board, and all eyes were upon him. He refused all the rich viands, and ate but sparingly of the plainest food. His name did not excite any suspicion amongst those present, for he was as yet not known or talked of in London, except perhaps in high circles, where his citation to appear before the Chancellor to answer what proved to be an unsupported charge of heresy might be spoken of.

Remembering the undoubted scholarship of the Bishop of London, he was busied in preparing a translation of Isocrates to present to him; but it seemed to him that

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with Sir Harry Gilford engaged with his Court duties, and his son Amyas abroad, he might have to wait some time before he had the chance of presenting it. After supper William Tyndale begged to be shown the "corner" where he might lie down—"for," said he, "I am aweary with some days' journeyings."

He was conducted accordingly to an upper chamber in what was called Master Amyas's quarters, where he found books and parchments, and pens and ink, the walls being hung with some quaint old tapestry.

"Methinks this is too fair a chamber for me," he said, turning to the servant who had guided him thither.

"It is a chamber set apart by Master Amyas for any priest who may need it," was the reply, and closing the door, a heavy oaken one studded with nails, he left him.

Like Daniel of old, William Tyndale opened his window, and kneeling down by it, before repeating the accustomed office, he gave thanks to God for His goodness, and prayed Him to assist him in the progress of his work, by any means, and in any way He saw best. He thought much of poor little Joan Walsh, of the child Elfrida, and of Karina Mountjoy. If indeed it were true that Karina was to give herself in marriage to Hubert Gilford, how would she fare in this great gay city? She would be much at the Court, her old tie with the Queen would be renewed, and who should say what dangers might not beset her? "He setteth the solitary in families," William Tyndale exclaimed, "for verily I am as much concerned for the dark-haired maiden, and for the weakly Joan, as if they were my very own."

William Tyndale always rose at dawn, and yet, by the noise under his window looking out on the Thames, he knew he was by no means the first to be astir on this fair summer morning. Looking out, he saw the river

covered already with gay barges, all in preparation for the Royal departure to Greenwich. Kings and queens in the sixteenth century lived much in the sight of their people, and Henry VIII. had all the elements of popularity which made him (as yet not the blood-stained tyrant of later days) dear to the citizens of London. They loved to feel they had a part in all his gay pageantry, his jousts and merrymaking.

And it was noticed at this time that the more grave and solemn the Queen looked, the King was more jocund and hilarious. The visit of the Emperor Charles V. was, however, an event which chased the clouds of anxious foreboding from Katherine's brow, and she had never been seen to look brighter than when, leading the little Princess Mary by the hand, she entered the Royal barge betimes on this brilliant day, to avoid the great heat, and to be in readiness to receive her nephew at Greenwich Palace. She wore her hood-cap of five corners, bordered with rich gems; the black mantilla veil hung from the back of the cap on either side, for Katherine never wholly gave up the costume of her beloved Spain. Her robe was dark blue velvet, with a long, graceful train edged with fur, straight sleeves with deep lace ruffles, and over them great hanging sleeves of miniver. It was a heavy, cumbrous attire for a Midsummer-day, and poor little Mary's was scarcely less gorgeous, and rich with many gems.

William Tyndale was in the crowd by the stairway as the Royal party stepped down. The Queen's train was borne by four ladies in bright orange-coloured satin petticoats, with black jackets over them, which contrasted well with the dark blue of the Royal mistress's attire. Two children of tender age followed close upon the little six-year-old Princess, their laughing faces a great contrast

to little Mary's frightened air, which even in those childish days gave her the forbidding, gloomy expression which was really the result of excessive shyness and distrust of herself.

Alas! poor child, what a future lay before her—a victim herself of a cruel, persecuting creed, in her own miserable unhappy life she was the instrument of woe and grief to thousands whom the fires of martyrdom could not shake in their renunciation of the errors of the Church of the Seven Hills.

William Tyndale watched the procession with interest, and a bystander said,—

“It is thought the Emperor comes to be betrothed to the little Princess Mary, and hence the eager haste and anxiety to meet him.”

“That could hardly be,” said another; “they are too near akin.”

“We know how to get rid of troublesome hindrances,” said a third. “But hist! here comes his Grace the Cardinal's barge. The King will accompany him, it is said; they have forgotten late grievances.”

And if the Queen's barge was magnificent, what was the Cardinal's? All purple satin and red trappings, with gold ornaments and crosses worked in seed-pearls on velvet banners. Then what a long train of attendants and heralds, who cried to clear the way for the King's Highness and his Eminence the Lord Cardinal. Henry now appeared at the topmost step, laughing and bowing right and left, fat and portly, in a very tight gold-coloured suit out of which he seemed like to burst, a cloak of rich crimson velvet and ermine carelessly worn on his left shoulder, his hat the hat we all know so well in Holbein's picture. The people cheered their merry-looking monarch enthusiastically. He leaned one

hand, with a weight a trifle heavier than was pleasant, on the shoulder of the unhealthy, withered-looking man at his side.

"My Lord Cardinal looks ill at ease," Tyndale thought; "methinks his archiepiscopal mitre must have somewhat a sharp edge to it. What would he say, did he know one William Tyndale stood so near—the poor priest who was summoned in his name before the Court at Gloucester?"

Wolsey's thin lips were parted in a ghastly smile as the King whispered a jest in his ear, which provoked from his Highness a peal of loud laughter.

On they passed, and many historic personages were in their train. Barge after barge was brought to at the steps, and the "Court" entered them to the sound of music. Sir Thomas More with some shaft of ready wit, and Linacre at his side, brought up the rear. Away the gay fleet floated down to the Palace of Greenwich; and William Tyndale was waiting for the crowd to disperse to pursue his way towards Sir Harry Gilford's again, when there was a cry of "have-to" from Sir Thomas More's barge, and a little man hastened down to the riverside, an academic gown floating behind him.

"Time and tide wait for no man, not even for Erasmus!" called the pleasant, cheery voice from the barge.

"What More can we expect from them?" was the quick retort, as the famous Greek scholar leaped lightly into the boat.

"He sees and knows me not," William Tyndale said to himself; "he expected not to find me gazing at a river pageantry. But I would like to have a word with him."

As he thus thought, his sleeve was pulled, and he saw the man who had been friendly to him the night before.

"Wilt follow yon gay train adown the river to Green-

wich? If you have a mind, there is our household barge at your service, and myself for company."

Seeing William Tyndale hesitate, he said,—

"It will be a brave sight at Greenwich, and emperors come not to our shores every day."

While the man, Peter Ven, was speaking, the barge came up to the steps, and the waterman called out,—

"Art coming, Master Peter, or any of the folks from Gilford House?"

"A fool cometh," a shrill voice was heard to call from some little distance. "Hast heard the story of King Robert of Sicily, man? Who knows I may change seats with the Emperor, and you may row back the great Charles instead of me? One fool makes many. How ye will all gape at and court him, and——"

"Hold thy tongue till we are afloat," was Peter's answer. "See, there are some of thy betters who would fain enter the barge before thee."

"No better than a fool! Alas! that there should be so goodly a crowd of 'em," and then with a flying leap the jester had reached the barge, and Tyndale and two or three other members of the household followed him.

The easy movement of the barge, and the monotonous song of the watermen, soothed William Tyndale with their influence, and withdrawing from the rest of his companions he gave himself up to meditation.

Erasmus might, if he chose, add his word to that of Sir Harry Gilford, and obtain for him the quiet asylum in the Bishop of London's city house, near St. Paul's Cross, if he were so inclined. Fulham was then in the country: and Tonstall lived principally under the shadow of the Cathedral, and only went to his palace there for occasional refreshment from the cares of his office. William Tyndale did not feel perfectly secure of Erasmus's

help—he was known to turn the cold shoulder when it suited him, and there was perhaps a latent jealousy of one whose name was spoken of at the seats of learning as the Greek scholar who trod hard on the heels of his own fame. Of keen wit and inexhaustible powers of repartee, Erasmus and Sir Thomas More had the mutual attraction of striking sparks of brilliant light from each other's anvil. Both were far-seeing and courtier-like in an age when the ways and the manners of courtiers was the only road to royal favour. Henry VIII. liked, of all men who ever lived, to be amused as well as flattered, and Sir Thomas More's culture and grace speedily gained him the King's good will. Bitter indeed was the end to be, as for all who trusted on that broken reed of the King's favour! The man on whose shoulder Henry leaned, as we saw him descending the steps, felt that his sun was on the decline, and it was but a heavy heart, laden with doubts and anxieties, which Wolsey carried with him to Greenwich Palace that day.

The Emperor's arrival was expected, and the gardens and banks were lined with a great crowd of eager spectators. The King had gone farther down the river to meet Charles, and was to bring him by water to the palace stairs at Greenwich about five o'clock.

The heat of the long day was so great that the patience of the lookers-on was tried greatly. Tyndale escaped from his companions, and sought refuge and shelter from the sun under the spreading branches of a noble oak, whose gnarled and knotted trunk was a sign of great age. Stretched on the mossy turf, with some leaves of his precious manuscript in his hand, with the Greek text which he was constantly revising and writing down points for inquiry, the distant hum of the crowd and the strains of music did not disturb him. It happened that Eras-

mus, tired even with the brilliant conversation of Sir Thomas More, left him amongst a crowd of admiring listeners, and directed his steps to the same oak under which Tyndale sat.

The recognition was instantaneous, and the two scholars joined hands.

"How came you hither?" Erasmus asked. "Methought you were in desert places in the far west of this island of yours, good William, and behold here you are in Royal demesnes, and on the skirts of a gay crowd."

"And I might ask the same question, How came you here? Methought you had returned to the land of sluices and frogs and scavenger storks."

"A fair description verily of my native country; for all that, I know not that I would change it for yours, good Tyndale. Ha! at the old trick," and Erasmus fingered the leaves of the manuscript which lay on the turf. "The ants are running riot over the parchment, showing no respect to the Gospel—and so good William, there will be low creatures to run over thy work if ever it is made common. It is well to do such a work, but it is ill to debase it by making it too cheap."

"Nevertheless, I mean to do so—may our Lord help me!" was the answer. "Now with thy greater scholarship, read over these notes in the margin, marking with this charcoal thy view thereof."

It was like the warhorse sniffing the battle, or like the fish rising to the bait, to Erasmus. The two men were soon lost to everything but the derivation of a word, the rendering of a doubtful passage, the authenticity of a particular source whence it came. The little delicately-made, wiry Erasmus talked and argued and jotted down notes with the pointed pencil of charcoal, and reasoned and contested a point, till his deep-set eyes were aflame

with the light of intellect. Slower and more ponderous in his words, calmer and less excitable, William Tyndale accepted criticism where he was convinced, and resisted it where he was not shaken in his own opinion. At last the books were closed, and Erasmus leaned back against the giant oak, and took a draught of light wine from a flask he bore about with him. He offered it to Tyndale, who just tasted it and gave it back, and in return held out part of his cake to Erasmus.

"Nay, I will not destroy all chance of appetite for the banquet, if ever their Highnesses appear. To see you nibbling at that dry crust—no offence, I hope—makes a man thirst. You ought to look like a starveling who scarce can keep the soul in the body, whereas you look hale and hearty; and I—faugh! I have aches and pains from my crown to my foot. I marvel I live, though I do my best to live. After all, life, in Holland or England, is sweet—most specially sweet on a day like this. That sky! what a brave colour! I love life, good William."

"Aye, and I love it also; but there are words which seem to speak to me from above, that life is scarce begun here. Not till we see Jesus the Lord," and Tyndale crossed himself, "shall we see *true Life*. 'I am the Life,' saith He—in the English tongue so it standeth. Say, Erasmus, shall I not do well if, after all toil and all labour, I can feel that I have given the people the Word which says to them, Jesus is the Life?"

"Aye, perhaps good William, but—but—"

"But what, Erasmus?"

"Faith is weak. How do we *know*? We know no more than Plato—we are less than he, less than Socrates, less than one of those great ones of old."

"We *know* no more; but, Erasmus, faith is ours. Is

there not a witness in your heart that God is true, and His Revelation true? Is there not this witness? Yea, I know there is."

Erasmus closed his eyes, but did not speak. Presently he started.

"Come, let us see if those shouts and acclamations do not herald the approach of the crowned heads. The Emperor has with him, so I believe, a youth whom I know and esteem—Alfonso de Valdès, a young Spaniard. He is his secretary, and has a swift and able pen. He hath writ some wondrous clever tracts to defend his imperial master in the face of Europe, anent the capture of France. He is a twin, and is his brother's double. None can tell them apart, but there is a difference. Juan is more of the saint, and busies his young brain with matters of religion. He would be after thy own heart, Tyndale, while Alfonso is more after mine," and Erasmus laughed.

"I have heard the names of these brothers, or rather of their father, Hernando de Valdès. He is a native of Cuença, and a young maiden whose mother was sometime a lady-in-waiting to Queen Katherine was their kinswoman."

"Prythee, what is this maiden's name?"

"Mistress Karina Mountjoy. Her father was English—alas! an English villain. She hath been a willing pupil of mine in the family of the worthy knight Sir John Walsh, where I filled the office of tutor and chaplain. I came hither to obtain entrance to the household of the Lord Bishop of London, as you once counselled."

"Aye, and thou hast well done. He is a right learned scholar and divine. He will hold out his hand to thee gladly. A most learned, dignified, and illustrious prelate. I will speak with him on the matter, and there is

one Hebelthwaite who would do the like and present thy work."

"I know him also, and I have introduction to Sir Harry Gilford, in whose house I lodged last night."

"Then verily thy luck is assured and certain. I am returning to the land of 'frogs and storks,' but I shall hear soon of thy success. Hist! there are the trumpets and the ring of the clarion—they must be nearing the stairs. Here we shall gain a good view. How the folk are rushing and hooting on the other side of the river. They make much ado over their King and their Cardinal."

"He is good-natured enow—his Highness the King, I mean, not the Cardinal," said Tyndale.

"Aye, the lion of the desert is good-natured till his mood be crossed, and till he has *tasted blood*. He may rend in pieces when 'the butcher's dog' can but wound with his fangs. What banners and flags and garlands! Let us get yet nearer."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LITTLE CLOUD IN THE SUMMER SKY.

At the great hall door of Greenwich Palace stood Queen Katherine, holding by the hand the little Princess Mary, surrounded by the nobles and ladies of the Court, waiting to receive her nephew, the Emperor Charles V. An unwonted softness shone in Katherine's eyes as the Emperor, ascending the steps with the light footfall of youth, knelt to receive his aunt's blessing. Then turning, she placed the little Mary's hand in her cousin's, and the child, looking up with wondering eyes, received his kiss with no childlike response or smile on her grave, colourless face.

If, as some historians say, the Emperor's mission was to betroth himself to little Mary, he had not much encouragement in the reception of his little bride. She was never an attractive child nor an attractive woman. The somewhat gloomy temper of her mother, which neglect and disappointed love turned into asceticism, shadowed this child from her infancy.

Had the negotiations of the marriage of the Princess Mary with Charles V. been brought to a successful termination, what might not England have been spared in the years to come? How vain it is to indulge in the speculation of what might have been had the course of events on which we look back in history taken a different turn. In this, as in everything else, we must bow to the unalterable law that *L'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose*.

Close behind the Emperor came the King, full of brightness and merriment.

"Well, sweetheart!" he said to his wife, chucking her under the chin with a familiarity she detested in public, "we have brought thee thy Emperor nephew--see to it he puts not out the lustre of thy kingly husband."

Bowing low with the cringing manner he affected on all occasions when he and royalty were seen in public, came Wolsey, kissing the hands of Queen, Princess, and Emperor; while several Spanish nobles were presented by the Emperor to his English relatives.

"There see!" exclaimed Erasmus, who was, as we know, standing within sight of what was passing. "That comely youth now doing obeisance to the Queen is Alfonso de Valdès. He is fair to look upon, and what a lithe, supple figure! With what grace those Spaniards wear the short cloak, and hold the plumed hat in their hands as they do reverence. We shall hear more of those brethren

yet. Juan hath the soul, and Alfonso the wit. Ha! here comes Sir Thomas. Well, good sir!"

"Well, good sir, indeed!" said More. "Wilt miss presenting thyself to yonder goodly company? Moping here under the trees and giving me the slip. Fie on thee, Erasmus!"

"William Tyndale hath found me other work than to mope. Dost know him, Sir Thomas?"

There was something of overdone courtesy in Sir Thomas More's low bow.

"Aye, verily, I have heard the name as the name of a scholar and no mean author. I would fain hear also that he uses that weapon of learning in the service of the Church."

"Yea, and in the service of God," was the answer. "The weapon aforesaid is in strong hands for the Church if left in Sir Thomas More's."

A smile greeted the well-turned compliment, and laying his hand on Erasmus's arm, Sir Thomas More drew him away.

The shouts and cheering of the spectators both on the banks and on the river, which was crowded with barges and boats, with all manner of streamers and colours flying, were ringing through the quiet air; while in a meadow on the other side of the Thames there was a goodly show of jugglers and mountebanks. Booths with all kinds of refreshment were set up, Punch was squealing and shrieking very much as he squeals and shrieks at the present day, gipsies were telling fortunes, pedlars were selling their wares, and all the good folk were ready to make holiday because their great monarch had gone down the river to meet the Emperor in his barge, and had brought him up the river to Greenwich Palace for a banquet, the glories of which had reached

the ears of many who hoped to come in for some of the leavings, by hook or by crook, by fair means or foul, ere nightfall.

Beneath all this frivolity, grave questions were astir in some sober people's minds. The Emperor's visit had a deeper meaning than lay on the surface; and words spoken on this first day of his arrival by Charles, ensured for him and the Queen the bitter enmity of the crafty Cardinal, who, climbing ever higher and higher, had a vision in the distance of the highest step of all—the Papal chair. To effect this in the future he must curry favour with crowned heads, and first and foremost with Charles. Bitter indeed was the disappointment and rage which swelled in his heart when the words of the Emperor whose favour he courted were bandied about the Court.

When told of the circumstances of the Duke of Buckingham's execution, he said, making one of those *bon mots* then so much appreciated—

“Ah! then hath the butcher's dog pulled down the fairest buck in all Christendom.”

Allusion to his humble origin always galled Wolsey, and from that time the breach between himself and Queen Katherine steadily widened.

Tyndale wandered away from the palace and the grounds, and believing it hopeless to find either Sir Harry Gilford or any of his people, he walked in the cool of the evening towards London. He entered a boat at the invitation of a waterman, who agreed for a trifling sum to row him back to the wharf by London Bridge. The man talked of what was the current gossip of the time—the gay doings at Greenwich, the talk that the king had been in love with a fair lady named Anne Boleyn, and that the Queen had been very unhappy therefrom. Current topics like this were kept well before the people

from mouth to mouth—there were no daily cheap papers to keep the city informed of what went on within its walls: and so the watermen and barbers made it a part of their daily business to collect and propagate news for the benefit of their customers.

The same might be said of tradesmen, whose stores were often centres of news—London Bridge one of the chief of these centres, many of the most distinguished merchants living on it. The houses were built on either side, with a gap here and there, and it was a busy scene and favourite resort. Sir William Hewit the clock-maker lived here, and here were several places where the books in the early black-letter type were issued. One of these had for its sign a looking-glass, and another an angel.

William Tyndale bent his steps thither that he might pray in the chapel of St. Thomas à Becket, which stood on the east side, and had full and frequent services in it up to the time of the Reformation. Between the chapel and Southwark one of the arches was joined by a draw-bridge, and at the north end of the opening was a tower, on the front and top of which the heads of people beheaded for high treason were exposed. William Tyndale passed below the tower, and several such heads were, as it were, looking down on the gay and busy crowd below—a ghastly and horrible relic of barbarism, of which the Word of Love and the Gospel of the Lord was to seal the doom.

The chapel was not without its evensong worshippers, and a young priest who was officiating gave notice that the Father who was to have addressed them that evening on the martyrdom of Becket was threatened with a sweating sickness, and in place of his preaching to them, they must offer up prayers for him.

It was in the fulness of William Tyndale's heart that

he walked round to the robing-room or vestry-chamber of the clergy, and asked if he should take the place of the sick priest.

The young man willingly assented, and soon Tyndale was standing in the pulpit, and making the time-honoured walls of the little chapel resound with the Word. The resonant, clear voice attracted listeners, and some of the idlers on the bridge came in to hear.

"Who is that priest?" was asked by a noble-looking man who had his house on the bridge with his large cloth store, and another dwelling in the parish of St. Dunstan. "Who is that priest?" he repeated.

"Verily I recognised not his name," said the young clergyman. "He helped me at a pinch, and lectured to the people—this being a vigil—in place of Father Grant, who is, I fear me, sick unto death; but I have let the priest depart, and in my folly asked not his name again; but I fear me he holdeth some of those new notions. He was speaking from the manuscript he drew from his bosom. Methinks it was one of the Holy Gospels in English."

Humphrey Monmouth shrugged his shoulders:—

"Aye, thou art right. I'll not rest till I hear him again, and find out aught of him. He is one of those to whom God hath given a gift—the gift of a tongue which reacheth like a sword into the inmost heart."

William Tyndale spent some days in London before he saw his host, who was, by virtue of his office, at Greenwich, except for coming in his barge at intervals with orders to the Palace of Westminster, and catering for the wants of the enormous retinue which had daily to be fed, and well fed too.

"Verily the Comptroller of the Household and Master of Revels hath no easy time of it," Sir Harry Gilford

said, when, after giving William Tyndale a somewhat hasty greeting, he proceeded to speak of his son's letter and Sir John Walsh. He told Tyndale that the household was to be broken up for the time, as his eldest son Amyas proposed to live abroad for a year, and that gay Hubert was not one to settle down in a quiet life.

"Nay," Sir Harry said, "not all the dark-eyed beauties with dulcet voices, and movements like the swans in the Thames below our terrace, will keep that boy straight. I know him well—off at a gallop when the fit takes him. He is in love, I doubt not, for a month. The maiden hath no money, but that concerns me not. Were he steady-going, I'd as lief she had no money. Then there is my eldest son, too grave by half, older than his father, and a very pink of propriety. If their mother had lived—God rest her soul!—it might have been different. But to come to your affairs, Master—I crave pardon, Sir William—Tyndale. You are welcome to tarry here till you enter into the household of His Grace of London. I will further this through one Hebelthwaite. The Bishop hath a huge library, and keeps a noble board. There's the best venison pasty in all London to be tasted at London House, and the fish during Lent makes me wish it were always Lent," Sir Harry said, rubbing his hands. "Be that as it may, tarry here till I send those lazy menials packing—eating and guzzling, and all to keep fresh rushes on the floors and kill the vermin. Nay, nay, I'll have no more of it. And now I must be back to my barge. You are welcome to tarry, mind that, good Sir William, and let Sir John Walsh know. As to my hare-brained son, I must write to him by the hand of my chaplain, for I'll not have time to sign but my name." And in hot haste Sir Harry Gilford departed.

All this did not wear a very encouraging aspect. Days

went on, passed in quiet study in the upper chamber, but there was no word of Erasmus and his fair promises as to the Bishop of London—no word of those whom he had left in Gloucestershire, and no word of any friend who would aid him in his work.

But Tyndale revised and prepared with great care the Oration of Isocrates, which was to win him favour with the Bishop. And in the long summer evenings he would go out into the busy crowds—sometimes on the bridge, sometimes in the gardens of the Temple, sometimes in St. Paul's yard, and in the nave of the great church itself.

Every day the numbers in Gilford's house lessened, and Tyndale felt that the time of which Sir Harry had spoken was at hand. And so it proved. One morning, about ten days after Tyndale's coming, Sir Harry arrived, and invited him to accompany him to the Bishop of London's, on the south side of St. Paul's Cross. "For," said he, "I am not likely to be free of my Court duties for many months, and I must clear the house;" and Sir Harry Gilford hastened with Tyndale to the Bishop's house. It was the day when he was known to be in London to receive any petitions or complaints.

The large hall was filled, not to say crammed, with both petitioners and complainants; but Sir Harry Gilford caught hold of one William Hebelthwaite, who was attached to the Bishop's retinue, and who had known something of Tyndale at Oxford.

"I leave you, forsooth, in good hands," Sir Harry said, with the air of a man who had relieved himself of a burden; and to say the truth, the Comptroller of the King's Household felt a little uncertain as to whether or not the friendship of Tyndale might not bring him into trouble. He was a good-natured man of the world, who

would do a kindness provided it were safe to do it, but always kept himself and his own interests well to the front. There are many Sir Harry Giffords in our day!

William Tyndale was invited to take a seat in a recess made by one of the deep oriel windows, and William Hebelthwaite promised to call him when his lord could grant an interview.

The summons did not come that day, or the next. Then his manuscript was returned to him by Hebelthwaite, and he was advised to wait yet awhile. Day after day Tyndale sat in the recess, often weary, and his slender stock of money getting very low, now that he had to provide his own lodging. Still he hoped on, and would be often up with the first sun-rays, and be at his work for hours before he took his way to the Bishop's Palace. The Giffords' house was closed, and a sense of friendlessness and solitude in a crowd oppressed him. For, as I have said, William Tyndale was a man of human sympathies and tenderness for all that were weak and poor, and needed help. This loneliness in London—while feasting and merriment were going on in Greenwich, and grand processions of royal barges with sumptuous hangings coming up the river to the palace at Westminster, that such citizens as liked might see the Emperor—I say this loneliness of Tyndale, and persistence in the work to which he felt himself called of God, is a pathetic page in history—pathetic, and yet how noble and majestic! Those great and royal personages, that long list of princes and nobles, where is their record now? They live in the memory of man, it is true—some by reason of their cruelty and treachery, some by their suffering and persecution, some by their griefs and woes: but the lonely, unnoticed priest, to whom at that time Erasmus gave not another thought, and the brilliant Sir

Thomas More had not begun to dread or notice as an antagonist, what is his record? Why does every step of his earthly pilgrimage interest and touch us so deeply? Why do we almost shrink from following him through the thorny paths which we know he must tread till he reaches his crown of victory? Is it not because his work is greater than his name? That he has left us that work, by which we hold him in grateful and loving memory? As we put our hand upon it day by day, and rehearse it in our children's ears for exhortation and reproof, we feel it is the Pearl of great price which this scholar of the sixteenth century has made our own, and for which we reverence and love his name wherever the English tongue is spoken.

Once more the Oration of Isocrates was sent in to the Bishop of London by Hebelthwaite's hand, and the next day when Tyndale arrived, sick with hope deferred, at the Bishop's house, he was hastily ushered into his presence.

Tonstall was too distinguished a scholar not to be struck with the beauty and grace of the translation, which he had been reading in the quiet of his chamber overnight.

William Tyndale stood before his superior with a calm, dignified patience, while his heart was beating fast in anticipation of what the Bishop would say.

"Sir William Tyndale, author of this learned translation of a fragment of noble Greek literature?" Tonstall asked with a grave, pompous air. "You are Sir William Tyndale?"

"Yes, my good Lord, I am your servant, William Tyndale?"

"What would you seek at my hands?" the Bishop asked.

“A place in your household, my Lord, and access to your library, and your introduction to the libraries of other noble folk. I am seeking all authorities and all possible help in my work. Erasmus gave me to understand that he deemed it probable you would grant me a corner in your house, where I might pursue my work, and from time to time have the benefit of your sage counsel and critical judgment.”

The Bishop leaned back in his chair and folded his long white hands—on the middle finger of the right a cameo ring of great value was worn, bearing the mitre and token of St. Paul.

“You are translating more works after this fashion?” and the hand was raised and laid on the manuscript.

“Yes, my Lord Bishop; but above these I now study the ancient Greek manuscripts for the rendering of the Holy Gospels and the Epistles into English. The Hebrew I study for the rendering of the Psalms and books of the Prophets.”

The Bishop raised his eyebrows, and a scarcely audible “whish” came through his thin lips: but he was cautious, and would not betray his real sentiments. After the fashion of many since who are asked to hold out a hand to help what looks a doubtful scheme, he said,—

“Ah! a heavy bit of work for the most erudite, as Erasmus will tell you—heavy and burdensome. Are there not other mines where you may dig deep with better promise of success?”

“Nay, my good Lord, I trow not; for this Book that I desire to give to the people containeth jewels before which all others pale in lustre. I ask your aid, my good Lord, humbly and with no self-conceit, knowing as I do that you are as the fount of Greek scholarship in this city.”

The Bishop smiled.

"Well spoken, and I thank you for your pleasant word," he said. "I deplore that my house is fuller than it can hold at this juncture, and I have more than enow to do to satisfy all promises I have made. I must make no new ones till the old are redeemed. But sure am I you will find service in London, and perchance better help than mine. Ah! eleven of the clock! I am bidden by the King's Highness to wait on him at Westminster, whither he lodged last night. Thus, Sir William Tyndale, I must give you my benediction, which I do heartily, and pray you to believe that I am your very good friend."

William Tyndale knelt, and the Bishop mumbled over him some Latin words. Then some attendants, summoned by a sign from the Bishop, drew near from the other end of the chamber, and Tyndale withdrew. His carefully prepared Oration, so clearly written on fair parchment, was brought to him in the hall, and so he departed.

Tonstall had carefully avoided any strong opinion, and, like many men of the world, congratulated himself on his wisdom.

The time for decided action or for decided opinion had not come for Bishop Tonstall. It was to come later, when a great fire kindled at St. Paul's Cross rose up to heaven as thousands of copies of Tyndale's New Testament fed the angry flames.

But by courtly and cautious time-serving, in bold contempt of William Tyndale's work—by destroying it as he thought by fire, and sweeping it from the face of the earth—did Tonstall attain his object?

Ah, no! the God whom Tyndale served would take care of His own, and phoenix-like, from the ashes of the hated books others should arise, fairer and more perfectly revised by the same untiring hand.

CHAPTER XVII.

"PUT NOT YOUR TRUST IN PRINCES."

THE disappointment was bitter, but it did not quench William Tyndale's zeal. He had hard work to live for some weeks, and none of his seeming friends inquired for him. At last news which he had earnestly longed for from Gloucestershire reached him. He was returning one day from officiating at the church of Saint Dunstan, when a noble-looking old man, who had been listening with the deepest interest to his sermon, accosted him.

"Sir William Tyndale, I have to-day learned your name, and I have desired for a long space to speak with you. Now I have to deliver into your hands this packet, which came by a messenger from the clothier at Stroud, who is a business ally of mine. I would fain tempt you into my house to supper, and so it please you, and bid you welcome, and God-speed in the work you have before you. These are times when one may well say that true and faithful priests are needed."

It did not escape Humphrey Monmouth that Tyndale's eyes were fastened on the large packet tied securely with many twists of cord, and sealed with a large wax seal.

"You are longing for leisure to read this missive, and I will not prevent you. My house is hard by, and, though much under the shadow of the church, it is a peaceful home. My wares are displayed on the Bridge, and my son and daughter-in-law inhabit that house. I came hither some years ago, when it pleased God to prosper me so mightily in my business."

Humphrey Monmouth led the way to the gate in a low stone wall, and opening it with a key at his girdle, he

held it for his companion to pass, and then re-locked it. Within the walls was a large square of turf, which could be smooth and green even in the heart of the city. In the middle was set a sun-dial, and the long low front of the house was covered with ivy, in which innumerable sparrows chirped and twittered.

"It hath the air of a religious house," Tyndale said; "so quiet, so peaceful,—in the world, yet out of it."

"Aye, as we Christian folk should be. But see, I will bid you sit down and rest in the arbour, and I will order thither some refreshing drink and light repast. Then you can read your packet, and I will see meanwhile that you have a chamber made ready. That packet hath lain in my pouch some days. I knew not where to find Sir William Tyndale. When I betook myself to Sir Harry Gilford's house, all was empty and silent. Then I heard Sir Harry hath taken up his quarters with the Court for some months. His eldest son, being wearied of many things here, is gone to live in Flanders for awhile; and the youngest, a merry-hearted, careless fellow, hath turned his back on London for a space, which is well for a young scapegrace, who was a mere idle gallant about the Court—no wholesome air for any man to breathe! His father tried to fix him to some work with me, but it was in vain. What is bred in the bone comes out in the blood. Nay, but I will not prate longer—" for Master Humphrey Monmouth saw how intently his guest was reading the first page of his letter. So intent was he that he noticed not his kindly host's departure, nor the coming of the serving-man with a silver tankard of wine and a platter of small pasties, rolled up in handy morsels for fingers where forks were unknown.

The sparrows chattered and twittered, a pair of ring-

doves in a dove cote cooed; from outside came murmurs of the city noise, bells chimed, bands struck up their fifes and horns: but Tyndale did not move or look up from the searching perusal of those closely-written sheets in Karina Mountjoy's fair clear writing, for which the tutor had so often praised her in those peaceful mornings' study at Sodbury Manor.

"Dear and kind Father," the letter began, "this cometh from your old pupil and friend, Karina. Alas! I would that I had brave news wherewith to cheer your heart; but I have evil tidings. Not to make a too long preamble, as you have often warned me against, when I penned a theme for you on any subject, I will go at once to the matter in hand. Ah! dear Father, the very night on which you bade farewell to Bristol our poor feeble Joan escaped from the convent, where stony-hearted folks had shut her in, and came, wild and fevered, to the house of Simon Bragge, nephew to our Tebita Collet, in Redclyffe Street. As you very well know, your kinsman, Master John Huchyns-Tyndale, parted from you on that same day to bring to Sodbury Manor the tidings that, contrary to her will, the dear child had been conveyed to Westbury. Sir John, her good father, had already betaken himself to Cranstone Castle, and our guest, whom you know of, accompanied him. But they came back dispirited, for they could get no word from my Lady of Cranstone, save jargon as to her duty to the Catholic Church and His Holiness the Pope. When Sir John came home, sharp words—the sharpest I have ever heard—passed between the poor distraught father and mother of our dear Joan: Dame Marjory weeping, and Sir John hurling at her, as men do in sore trouble, many reproaches for letting Joan be taken from Inclyff. Cicely was weeping too—the boys not knowing what to do, but

muttering that they would go and strangle Father Francis, and shake Lady Cranstone in her chair till her teeth chattered, and other wild talk; while Master Hubert Gilford did his best to pacify all, and was kind and good.

"We had but just departed to our chambers—not for sleep, but for quiet—when we heard the sound of a horn; and I, running in haste to the window which looketh on the Quadrangle, saw in the fading light Master John Huchyns on his brown mare, returning from his quest. He caught sight of me, and called to me—

"‘At least I have done your bidding, for I know of a certainty where the lost lamb is hidden.’

"Then there was a quick opening of doors, and we all stood, some on the wide stairway, and some in the hall, while John Huchyns told the story of his walk with you, dear Father, and of the certainty you had given you from the Mother Superior’s lips that our dear little Joan was at Westbury-on-the-Trym, not at Almondsbury Convent.

"John Huchyns was bidden to tarry that night; and, though sorrowful, we were all less burdened in spirit. For, sure, certainty is better than the agony of ignorance, where one we loved is concerned.

"The next morning I was, as you know is my wont, out early in the park; and indeed I was glad to take the milking-stool from one of the maidens and milk the meek-eyed roan cow you so much affected. It seemeth always to ease a sore heart when the hands can be busy. Then I went to the church to kneel and pray for my poor Joan: and as I knelt I knew one was beside me whose friendship I may not doubt. Dear Father, it was John Huchyns. As we left the church, I was thanking him for his goodness in riding to Bristol for tidings, when Hubert Gilford came up. These two men love not each

other, and I could scarce bear to see how their faces betrayed it. I hastened to talk of Joan, and to incite both to join in, as we went towards the Manor. But both men were as gruff and ill-conditioned as Tebita is when the churn is bewitched and the butter will not set. Methinks an evil spirit had bewitched these two, as they strode one on each side of me.

“We felt, as I say, in better heart, till noon, when up comes a sorry steed, a man bumping up and down on the saddle, his cap lost, his hands scarce able to hold the bridle, and he himself scarce able to hold his seat. Nay, how strange it is, good Father Tyndale, that when we are full of griefs, the humorous side of a thing will yet strike us. I am sore enough at heart, but I can scarce stop from laughing now when I recall Simon Bragge and the figure he cut on the big high horse, clinging to a saddle with pouches and pockets enow to hold a week’s provender, and his little spare body jolting and bumping on it.

“The news he brought us was that Joan had fled to his house like a frightened hare when the dogs are upon her; that she had fevered and raved with terror; and that the only thing that quieted her was the touch of his little maid’s hands—Elfrida by name.

“Poor Simon Bragge was so spent with his ride from Bristol, that Tebita tried to lead him away to rest and wipe off the dust of travel; but he would not move till he had told us all.

“‘The wise woman who lives by the Quay at Bristol,’ he said, ‘declared the dear child had fever of the brain, and that she ought to be removed to wider quarters. For,’ said Simon Bragge, ‘ours is but a small dwelling, and the room where the Mistress Joan lies is but a mere closet, just big enough for our little maid.’

"‘We must get her home!’ Dame Marjory exclaimed. ‘John, if you move not, I must move, weak woman as I am, to get the child home.’

"‘Hush, Marjory, speak not so wildly,’ said Sir John; ‘we must e’en see if there is danger to life in moving her. I will ride on to Bristol forthwith, and find the learned doctor who was the saving of Edward Lee when he pitched on his head.’

"So he pacified the poor mother; and not to be too lengthy, dear Father Tyndale, I will shortly say that by easy stages, on the fourth day after this, Joan was borne back to her home—the shadow of the lost Joan. She scarce knows where she is, but at times smiles a sickly smile at me and the little Elfrida—the child whose hand she would scarce loose, and whom she loves to have anear her. She clings to me, but whispers terrible things in my ear of all she thought she saw in those night vigils. Father Francis came a few days ago, but Sir John thundered at him that his house was his castle, and not a foot should he set in it. He crept away like a whipped cur.

"So our days go on, dear Father. It may be that Joan will be like this for many weeks. She had a bad frenzy a week ago, and the barber-surgeon came and let blood, being summoned from Stroud. But oh! dear Father, it is a piteous sight; and the most piteous of all is to hear Dame Marjory’s self-accusings. I would you were here with us. I have your precious parchment, and I con it over and over, so that I have it near, by heart—thus none can ever take from me the sweetness of that Holy Gospel at least, for it is graven on my heart.

"I pray you to let us have tidings of you, and if you find help and sustenance in the household of my lord the Bishop of London. Hubert Gilford thinks that he is sure to be a good friend, and he saith his father’s

word carries weight. It has taken me some days to write this epistle; and now I hear that a master clothier from Stroud will bear anything for us to London, to the care of one Master Humphrey Monmouth, to be given by his hand to Sir Harry Gilford for you.

"Yesterday, Joan asked, as I sat beside her, what long theme I was writing. It is so sweet to hear her ask a pertinent question. I answered that I wrote to you, dear Father Tyndale, of all that had happened.

"‘Give him my loving duty,’ she said, ‘and tell him the child Elfrida speaketh to me of the Golden Pathway.’

"I scarce knew what she meant, but Elfrida saith you will know. She is a dear child, and when Joan can spare her she sports about in the fields, and Cicely shows her all the country sights. She sleepeth in a little cot one side of Joan, and I on the other. She has been very quiet since the barber-surgeon let blood, but I notice she cannot now raise her arm from the coverlid. There are large black marks on one arm, caught she saith in her flight.

"I must not close without craving your blessing, dear Father. I have promised to be the wife of Master Hubert Gilford, but I have said I will not marry yet—next year will be time enow. I could not leave dear Joan, and Hubert will wait seven years, he saith, if needs must. He loves to hear me recite the Holy Gospel, and he is intent on being good—he saith I can help him thereto, and that you, dear Father, first rebuked him with a purpose on the highroad at Prinknash.

"And now I say farewell, and I pray you to remember in your prayers before the altar your humble and true servant and pupil,

"KATHARINA MOUNTJOY.

"*Post-scriptum.*—Ere I close this I would pray you to write by the messenger who bears my letter, and if

you could place in the packet the translation of the Epistle of Saint Peter, it would give us much joy. I mean by ‘us,’ Hubert and me. Do not think me overbold, I pray you, dear Father. Joan seemeth weaker to-day.—K. M.”

William Tyndale never raised his keen dark eyes from the closely-written pages till he had read them through twice; turning them over with a sigh and a smile, saying:—“Verily she is a clever scribe, and hath profited much from her studies.” Then the smile faded, and a cloud of anxiety swept over his fine face, as he exclaimed,—

“Alas! for the good resolves of Master Hubert Gilford. God grant they be not as the dew of the morning, vanishing away under the fierce heat of temptation. I would Karina had looked with favour on my noble-hearted kinsman rather than Hubert Gilford. Well, he is a wise man who leaveth these forecastings as to marriage bonds untouched. I have warned Karina as befitted my office, and I can do no more. The history of the poor sick child is a sad one. God grant she linger not long to suffer in this world, which hath been all too rough and hard for her. These machinations, these crooked false ways, in the name of the Church, and in the Name of God—verily they cry aloud for redress. How many souls like poor Joan’s—enthusiasts and visionaries—have perished under the rigour which has turned her brain. The Good Shepherd of the fold will gather her gently home—so I pray—and little Elfrida’s hand will lead her up the Golden Pathway.”

“You have not tasted of food, Sir William Tyndale,” said a voice near: and Tyndale started to his feet and

craved Humphrey Monmouth's pardon for much abstraction.

"Your chamber is ready, and our supper served," the kindly host said. "You take up your abode here, and it pleaseth you: and all I can do to aid you I will do. you can instruct me in return in many things I crave to know: for by your sermon at Saint Dunstan's you have stirred long-slumbering memories of what I learned at my mother's knee, who had been nurtured by her mother in the principles of those they called in those past centuries Lollards. I have a precious book in my possession I will show you. It is a printed Psalter in the type of the handwriting, and thence easier for dullards to read. I confess to you the books printed by Master Caxton do puzzle me not a little. But come, we shall have time and to spare for talk, and right glad am I that it should so fall out. The letter, did it contain ill tidings?"

"Part ill and part good—it speaketh of much that concerneth me and of those I hold in affection. I pray you can I send an answer back by the messenger?"

"Aye, I will see to it. He hath been here some days, but I will detain him till you can prepare your reply."

"If it were possible, I would ask for two days' grace, for I desire to send back to the writer of this letter a jewel which she prizes. Is the messenger in haste?"

Humphrey Monmouth looked puzzled for a moment, then he said:—

"He is a right good trusty fellow, and had need be, for he carrieth coin from me to his master, and from his master to me. You need not fear the jewel being lost. It will pack in small compass?"

Tyndale smiled:—"Perhaps," he replied, "somewhat larger than you dream of—a packet perchance thrice

the size of this." Then he went into the house with his kind host, where the board was plentifully spread for the evening meal, and some fifteen people, apprentices of the worthy alderman and chance guests, gathered round it.

William Tyndale did not take much rest for the next two days. By the help of wicks floating in oil in small earthen lamps he was enabled to work nearly all night. If that precious letter of Saint Peter was longed for by those whom he had left at Sodbury, it should not be his fault if they failed to obtain it. Just as the evensong was ringing on the second day, he had completed his work—performed, as that yet greater work was performed, with a steadfastness and perseverance which allowed of no diversion. It was a part of this man's nature never to swerve from a line he had marked out—on which he had seen the light of God's spirit pointing it out as the way. Truly it was, even amidst mockings and scourgings of bitter tongues, amidst bonds and imprisonments, a golden pathway to him.

The manuscript was ready, folded and secured with cord and wax, and committed to the Stroud clothier, who had for the last few days been a guest under Master Humphrey Monmouth's roof.

"You will deliver it, kind sir, into the hand of Mistress Karina Mountjoy, and bear with it my blessing."

"Is this all you will commit to my care, Father?" the clothier asked. "Methought Master Monmouth spake of a jewel."

"The jewel lies in your hand now," Tyndale said with a bright smile; "a jewel, an it please God, I will multiply by thousands in this land, nor call on a traveller to take in his saddle-bags one solitary gem."

"You speak riddles, good Father," the clothier said,

rubbing his head uneasily. "What if footpads or highwaymen set on me and rob me of this which you prize so highly? It will be no blame to me, I hope, for I am a poor man."

"Nay, nay, I will not sue thee for the cost thereof," was the reply; "and if I did, thou couldst not pay it. Take an easy heart away with thee on thy journey, which may God prosper; and if thou hast the chance, place the packet into the hands of her to whom I address it, Mistress Katharina Mountjoy, and ask her, if thou wilt, more concerning the jewel."

So, much bewildered, the good clothier departed.

All the interest of the Manor at Sodbury seemed to centre in poor Joan's chamber. Guests came and went—many friendly,—some curious—all with inquiries and kindly sympathy, and all ready to trace Joan's condition to the teaching of the late heretical tutor. Cicely and her mother were too restless to be good nurses. Tebita Collet did her best, and the hands and hearts of all the serving-maids were ready to do anything for the poor child.

Sir John rode sometimes over the country-side with his dogs and falcon, but his heart was heavy within him, and he dreaded to hear the piercing wailing cries from that upper chamber which too often greeted his return.

Katherine Huchyns came and offered her services as an extra nurse for the sick-room, but Karina judged wisely that too many people about Joan would be undesirable; and Katherine did a truly unselfish deed when she carried off Giles and Harry to Inclyff, where they could find better fishing, and have some good hawking sport with John Huchyns.

On Karina fell the chief burden of the nursing; but Hubert Gilford's presence, and short strolls with him in

the yew-tree alley or in the park, would often send her back refreshed.

What sign of consciousness Joan made was to Karina and to little Elfrida. They seemed to be linked in her poor distracted mind with something which was as a beacon in her darkness. Her mother, on the contrary, seemed in any lucid moment to bring back the pain and horror of something which she could not put into words, beyond confused entreaties to take Lady Cranstone's long thin hands off her neck, and to draw back the curtain that hid the face of the blessed Jesus from her.

“They hide Him from me—I cannot see Him,” she would cry. “Oh! I *cannot* see Him. The chapel is so dark, and dreadful words are whispered in my ear!”

But little Elfrida was the one who, when she realized her presence, would soothe her best. She would exclaim:—

“The golden pathway—the pathway of light that Father Tyndale spoke of—the golden pathway. Loose not my hand, Elfrida, but pull me up thither, beyond the roofs and towers, where Jesus is.”

Simon Bragge had come to Sodbury since his first visit, jolting on the brown cob, instructed by his larger half to take away the child and bring her home. But his Aunt Tebita's eloquence was too strong for him, united with the thought of the dim future—the money of which his child would probably be inheritor—and he returned to Bristol alone.

“Take the child away! How can you have the heart to think on't when the sight of her comforts the dear sick lamb better than all the potions and draughts; ay, and ten times better than the knife of the barber-surgeon. I hate them cattle, taking the life-blood from the weakly that they can ne'er pour back again.”

By this it will be seen Tebita was a woman of sound

sense, and greatly in advance of her time in her views of surgical treatment. Perhaps she was not so far on in pharmacy: for she had tied round Joan's slender neck a little silken bag of charms against "brain-sickness," which, if none knew of the contents, was held to be a sovereign cure.

A large house-spider and some powdered snail-shells were hidden in that little bag, which Tebita watched with deep interest, as a wise woman of Yate had assured her it was infallible as a remedy in cases like Joan's. And day by day her faith was sorely tried, as no sign of improvement manifested itself.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LETTERS.

It had been one of Joan's worst days—fits of frenzy had alternated with utter prostration and stupor, which seemed to bring her nearer and nearer to the valley of the shadow of death.

The sound of the horn at the Quadrangle gate was welcome as a break in the long monotonous day, and Karina was glad to be summoned by a sign from Tebita at the open door of the corridor.

"There is one below who hath brought you a packet of great price—so he says. He will only deliver it into your hand, Mistress Mountjoy; so it seems that a body entrusted with all the keys of the Manor House could not be trusted to take such a packet as that!"

"I do as I was bidden," the clothier said, when Karina went up to him. "I received this from the hand of Sir William Tyndale, now lodging at the house of good Master Humphrey Monmouth, and I promised to

	HOH	HOH
A	HOH	HOH
II	II	II
HOH	HOH	HOH

give it into the hands of Mistress Mountjoy—what other can I do?”

“Thanks, good sir!” Karina said pleasantly: “and I know my kinsman, Sir John Walsh, would wish you to tarry for refreshment. He has not returned from Yate, whither he and Dame Marjory rode this morning to consult a man in that town who professes to have skill in disorders of the brain, such as afflict their daughter. See,” Karina exclaimed with a bright smile, as Hubert Gilford came into the hall:—“See, here is a treasure, a letter from Sir William Tyndale! Come with me and share its contents. A joy shared is a joy doubled,” she said with one of those bright sweet smiles wherewith, even more than with her exceeding beauty, she took hearts by storm. They went together to the yew-tree alley, and there in the arbour Karina unfastened her precious packet.

“It is written in his own hand, the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Saint Peter!” she exclaimed.

“Well it is for us no Father Francis lurks here,” Hubert said. “But, sweet one, is it safe for thee to have this in thy keeping?”

Karina pressed her lips to the manuscript and said,—

“It is my joy, if not my safety.”

“Nay, make me not envious of the yellow parchment, Karina,” was the answer. “I like not to see thee so worn and weary with tending that poor maiden. How long will it go on thus?”

“I cannot say, but while life is in Joan I cannot desert her.”

“Wilt thou not come with me to London? Sir John says he leaves it in thy hands.”

“Nay, do not tempt me.”

“It *does* tempt thee then?” he asked eagerly.

"Thou knowest full well that to be with thee is my pleasure," she said, the damask rose colour rushing to her cheeks, and her dark southern eyes glowing with her emotion; "but I will not leave my friends here in their sore trouble and grief, while I can be of any service. It is gloomy here for thee in this once gay household," Karina added; "methinks thou hadst best take a further journey and return."

"It is like leaving my heart ever to leave thee," he replied; "and I dread leaving thee, for perchance——"

He stopped, and she raised her eyes inquiringly to his.

"Perchance!—what is in thy mind?"

"Ah! nought, sweet one—thou art in my heart. Now what saith the good Father?"

With one arm round Karina, and his head looking over her shoulder, Hubert heard her read as follows:—

"Dear child and tenderly beloved daughter in Christ,—I greet thee by the hand of the same trusty messenger that brought thy sweet, sad letter to me. Sweet, inas-much as it tells of thy faith and constancy; sad, as it tells of the sore plight of the maiden Joan. May the dear Lord temper the wind to the shorn lamb! Verily those who coerced and terrified her have a long reckoning to settle.

"I came hither to this great city full of hope; that hope has been dashed somewhat. Sir Harry Gilford's sons, Amyas and Hubert, being both abroad—one in foreign parts, and one, *thou* knowest where—his mansion on the Strand is closed; he being mightily taken up with the Court, and being put to it to cater for the pleasure and stomachs of a giddy throng during the Emperor Charles's visit to his aunt, the Queen's Highness.

"As to my Lord the Bishop Tonsall, to whom Sir Harry Gilford brought me in some haste, I gain nothing

from him. I waited in the outer hall for several days, praying to possess my soul in the patience which was needed. At last I was summoned from the crowd to my Lord's presence by the hand of William Hebelthwaite (whose goodwill methinks lieth on the surface). My Lord had no favour to me, and advised me to seek service in London, but not with him, as his house was full. So it is only left me to abide in London, and by the goodness of the Lord, I am now received for a space into the house of a godly man, one Humphrey Monmouth. I have a quiet chamber, though small, a bed, a chair, and a table, and it sufficeth. But I mark with serrow the course of this world, and hear our *praters* (I should say preachers), how they boast themselves and their high authority; and I behold the pomp of our prelates, how busy they are to set at nought peace and unity in the world (though it is not possible for them that walk in darkness to continue long in peace, for they cannot but either stumble or dash themselves at one thing or another that shall other unquiet all); and I see things whereof I defer to speak at this time. But this know, Karina, my good daughter in the faith, that there is not an inch of room in my Lord of London's palace to translate into the English tongue the Word of Life.

"That thou mayest be sure I have thee well in my remembrance, I have transcribed the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Saint Peter (though in time to come I may, with much study, see it good to make many changes in my translation for the better). But I send it to thee, as I went over some part of it at Greenwich with that great and learned scholar Erasmus, whose teaching at Oxford came to me with power, and likewise his bold avowal that to give the Scriptures free course in this realm was the highest work of the highest scholar. That I am far

beneath him I well know; and when I hear of that great terror of evildoers in the Church, Martin Luther, I say, Lord, what am I, to take on myself so great a work? Nevertheless, I will *go on*, nor swerve not.

“And what can I do better or more for thee and for the dear sick child than commend you both, with that winsome little Elfrida, to the holy keeping of the Lord God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?

“Say to the child Joan, if she be able to bear it, words from this letter of Saint Peter, more worth than any words of mine. Thou wilt find them easy to understand.

“‘For as moche,’ sayth the Apostle, ‘as ye know howe that ye were not redeemed wyth corruptible golde and silver, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb undefiled and withouten spots. Se that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, for ye are borne anewe, not of mortall seed, but of immortall seed, by the word of God which liveth and lasteth for ever. Because that all flesshe is as grasse, and all the glory of man is as the flower of grasse—the grasse is withered and the flower is faded awaye: but the word of the Lorde endureth for ever.’

“Say to the dear child, that if He is precious to her she need not fear. And when your hearts are filled with anger (as is mine at times, aye, and hot indignation against the blind leaders of the blind—the persecutors, the cruel ones, who in their ignorance mar the peace or take the very life-blood of the lambs of the fold)—I say when you feel indignation against such, lay to heart the words—

“‘Be ye all of one mynde, be pitifull, be courteous, not rendrynge evyll for evyll, neither rebuke for rebuke, but contrary wyse blesse.’ And remember these further

words which Saint Peter saith: 'Happy are ye if ye suffer for rightewesnesse's sake.'

"And now, tenderly-beloved daughter, there remaineth only that I speak of these last tidings of thine, that thou wilt be the bride of Hubert Gilford. Mayst thou be steadfast in the ways of holiness, and may he be thy helper thereto. But remember that there needeth a double strength and a double gift of grace, when those that are yoked together, in these perilous days, hold on, the one to the other, to be kept straight. The hand of the Lord can alone do this. I commend you both to Him and His power.

"And I pray you to give my greetings to all I have left behind in the Manor, that abode of peaceful study till the strife of tongues swept over it. Greetings of duty and respect to Sir John and Dame Marjory, and to their sons say, 'Give not up study, however irksome,' and greetings also to Mistress Cicely and good Tebita. And so I say farewell, once more commending thee, my daughter, to the loving care of my Lord Jesus Christ.

"WILLIAM TYNDALE.

"From the house of Master Humphrey Monmouth, hard by Saint Dunstan's Church, in the year of grace 1523."

"A brave letter, verily," was Hubert Gilford's remark as Karina finished. "A brave letter, and heard in thy voice it is as the sweetest music. Karina, I can scarce believe I am the same wild fellow in whose ears Father Tyndale's voice sounded reproof and caution on the king's highway only last April. Methinks it was the beginning of better things, and that thou wilt finish my cure. When I am near thee, it seemeth that all things of which I once made light are hateful and loathsome."

Karina's dark eyes were dim with tears, one of which

fell on the precious letter of her tutor and friend, and another was kissed away by her betrothed.

"Methinks," she said, "it would be good for thee to return for awhile to London, and let the dear Father hear by word of mouth how we speed. It is strange that thy father, Sir Harry Gilford, has shown so little kindness, methinks."

"Aye, so strange that I fear me some evil report must have reached him, for he is constrained to steer with the tide at Court. I will go and set it right, and return here at thy bidding to claim thee as my own. Say, Karina, thou wilt not fail me?"

"I fail thee!" she said sorrowfully: "nay, thou knowest that I will never fail thee while life lasts. Since the hour when thou gavest me the red scarf——"

She stopped, for it seemed that she acknowledged too much.

Of course it gave Hubert Gilford rapture to hear this confession, and he was not slow to take advantage of her softened mood. As they paced the yew-tree avenue or alley together they were a goodly pair, and the proud sense of having won the prize to which many had aspired filled Hubert Gilford's heart with exultation. He was like many a young man of the present day who is really "in love," as the phrase goes. He believed that he was sincere, and that it would be impossible for him to lapse from the ways of wisdom and pleasantness with Karina Mountjoy at his side. She was to be the dominant attraction before which all lesser ones should cease to assert themselves. We know, some of us, by bitter experience, that such love is but a broken reed to lean on: that there must be a deeper root downward, and a higher aspiration upward, to give security that in the trials and vicissitudes of life, love or friendship will

not fail us. For the house, whether of friendship or love, if built on the sand, may fall, and its ruin be great.

Karina Mountjoy had in her affection for Hubert the element which is exclusively a womanly element. She thought she had a mission to fulfil in making all things which were lovely and of good report lovely in his eyes. She encouraged him to read the old neglected classics in the study, she drew him to be regular at the services of the Church, joining him at the early mass every morning, even after nights of watching and anxiety which she had passed in Joan's sick-room. This element in her love made her hopeful: and she looked forward to a future which might be bright and happy, and when she might bring into the practice of daily life many of the precepts which William Tyndale had instilled. But though there is something beautiful and unselfish in love like Karina's, it is but a dangerous experiment, and many a woman has made shipwreck who has set out on the sea of married life with high hopes and aims like those I describe. It is the old story of the vain effort to build upon insecure foundations. And it was the same in the sixteenth as in the nineteenth century. Earthly love is not enough to keep the feet of one who has strayed far from the right path. Let no woman think that she is sufficient of *herself* to keep a man after marriage in ways of wisdom. She may do much by influence and patience and gentleness: but the love professed for her must not be taken as an infallible shield against lapses and errors which may—alas! often do—shadow her life with gloom and sadness. Her faith had been pledged to Hubert Gilford, and with her whole soul she determined to keep it sacred, and to do for him all that lay in her power when she left the Manor as his wife.

Sir John and Dame Marjory returned from Yate dispirited and sad. The wise man had nothing to recommend beyond what had been tried. Charms and letting more blood had been darkly hinted at, but "it has been a waste day," Sir John exclaimed wearily.

Karina had just come in from the yew-tree alley, and was busying herself in taking off Dame Marjory's riding-coat and hood, while Tebita and one of the maids arranged the supper in the hall.

"A waste day," Sir John repeated. "Methinks I must get counsel of some London leech. The child will die unless some help comes. What sort of day have you passed?"

Karina sighed.

"There has been great frenzy and crying aloud till about five of the clock. Then there was a space of quietness—not sleep, for her eyes are open, but she took some milk from my hand and smiled."

"It goes nigh to break my heart to look on her," exclaimed Cicely, who had come into the hall, bursting into tumultuous weeping.

"Nay, nay, thou dost but distress me more, Cicely," said her mother. "Woe is me! what pains and sorrows fall to a mother's lot!"

"May it please you," Hubert Gilford said, drawing near to Sir John, "I am purposed to go to London a day hence. Let me consult a physician approved by my father, and report his advice."

"I fear me our dear child is past physician's help," Sir John said hopelessly.

But after supper, when alone with Sir John and Dame Marjory, Hubert Gilford returned to the subject, and asked with renewed earnestness whether he might not

be allowed to perform this service in token of gratitude for long-continued hospitality.

"That is prettily spoken," Dame Marjory said. "I am well pleased that you should do as you say."

Dame Marjory had of late felt a little soreness against Hubert Gilford. It was hard for the mother to forgive him for overlooking her Briar Rose, Cicely, with a good portion coming to her, for Karina, a half-foreign orphan and penniless, and with no worldly goods save her poor mother's gewgaws and lace and finery, which, as Dame Marjory Walsh wisely observed, would never make a pot boil, much less find wherewithal to fill it.

"Yes, it is prettily said, and I pray you, good husband, to let the young gallant depart as he listeth."

"He will be taking Karina Mountjoy with him," said Sir John with something of his old pleasantry. "He will be taking Karina with him; prythee do not hasten him."

"Nay, Sir John, I leave her behind at her request. She would not be the noble Karina we all esteem so highly if she deserted her good friends when they need her presence. An it please you, I will start on my well-tried steed in four and twenty hours hence for London, and by hard riding I will reach it ere many suns have set. A special messenger shall be despatched with the physician's advice, and if none such can be found, I will return myself. Keep up heart, sweet Madam," he said, turning to Dame Marjory, "for something tells me that your daughter will be restored to you."

"He is a fine fellow, let the next come when he may," Sir John remarked, when he and Dame Marjory were alone. "I have noted many a time that those who sow wild oats with a lavish hand oftentimes mend their ways, and reap a goodly crop after the bitter one is swallowed."

“Oh! aye, he is well enough,” was Dame Marjory’s reply, “well enough; but don’t ask me to say I deem him as trusty as our Giles, for instance, or Master John Huchyns-Tyndale, for I don’t. Master Hubert Gilford may start aside like a snapped bow before you can whistle. But, alas! alas! there are my poor Joan’s wailings beginning again, piercing my very heart. I must e’en run and find out if there is aught I can do. Alas! alas! what a cry was that, as if some one had done to her some bodily hurt.”

“Grievous indeed!” murmured Sir John, as he was left to burrow beneath the coverlid of his bed to shut out the sound of his child’s raving. “Grievous indeed, and all the work of that priest and that proud old witch who brought him here. Curse them for their meddlesome folly. Women are weak creatures, and Marjory is one of the weakest of them, or she would never have been taken in as she was—never.”

Poor Dame Marjory! and she piqued herself on her sharp-sightedness, and her wisdom, and her superiority over her good husband in discernment of character and general sagacity in all worldly matters!

As William Tyndale passed day after day in London unnoticed by those from whom he might reasonably have expected patronage and help, his mind turned towards another country, where he might perhaps find a wider field for his labours and more encouragement in them. Humphrey Monmouth was a good and true friend, and his own soul being stirred to its depths, and his whole desire being towards a more excellent way than that he daily saw trod by the priests and prelates of the Church, he and William Tyndale became fast friends. In the narrow limits of that walled city garden great questions

were discussed, and Monmouth learned much from the same mouth which had proclaimed the glad news of salvation without money and without price in the pulpit of Saint Dunstan's Church, at the Cross in Bristol, and amidst the villages nestling under the Cotswold Hills.

After the labours of the day as merchant and alderman of the city, Humphrey Monmouth delighted to sit with Tyndale in the hut or bower beneath the ivy-mantled gable of the house, and hear how he had progressed with his translation, and to ponder of what further use he could be to him.

One afternoon Tyndale was late in returning from the parish, where he not only preached but visited the sick and poor, when Hubert Gilford arrived. He did not expect a very warm welcome from the worthy alderman, nor did he receive it. But after a few rather cutting remarks as to "rolling stones which gathered not moss," and "the brood of imps of which idleness is the mother," Master Humphrey relented somewhat when Hubert, carefully avoiding any sign of resentment, said he came to seek out Sir William Tyndale, having come to London on a mission for some that were friends of his.

"He is my true friend also," said Hubert, "and I owe him much gratitude for service rendered."

"I heard something of the sort," Humphrey Monmouth said, with a sly twinkle in his eye. "I would that your father had shown more sense thereof. Be that as it may, I am bound to say Sir William Tyndale's presence here is a boon and favour to me and many. He studieth most part of the day and night at his books, and he will eat but sodden meat and dry bread, and drinketh of no ale or wine—at the most but single beer. He is a pattern of holy life to young and old, rich and poor, and we do well to copy him."

"Yes, you tell me what I know full well. I am concerned at my father's seeming want of good fellowship: but he hath closed his house, Amyas is abroad, and I go thither as soon as I can obtain a passage. But I will tarry here to see Sir William Tyndale, if so it please you."

He came into the garden as Hubert was speaking, and his first question was—

"What tidings from Sodbury?"

Hubert then disclosed his mission, and said that he had obtained moneys and an escort from his father, and that a certain doctor who was celebrated for curing brain-disease had been despatched to Sodbury Manor to give his advice concerning Joan, which he declined to do without seeing her for himself. He had other business in those parts of a like nature, the son of a well-known nobleman being afflicted with fits which none could cure: so it was the bringing down two birds with one shot, and he trusted that he might alleviate the poor child's suffering.

"It was hard for me to leave the Manor," Hubert continued, "but I found by so doing I could better serve one I loved, and I came hither to perform her behest."

Humphrey Monmouth listened with some surprise to Hubert Gilford.

"He is changed for the better," he said to himself, and then, aloud, he added—

"What saith your good father anent Sir William Tyndale?"

"That he is sure the Lord Bishop of London will yet do what he desires."

"I have given up expecting it," was Tyndale's reply. "Let us speak of other matters."

And so the conversation turned on Joan and her sickness, the exciting cause of which made Humphrey Mon-

mouth's eyes flash with indignation. Then they talked of public matters—of the King and his increasing coldness to the Queen, of Wolsey's ill-concealed aversion towards her and the Emperor, whose visit had just ended. Then they spoke of the sure but silent working of the spirit of freedom which Tyndale said he had found amongst the people in London where he had ministered—so that they were like birds who catch a gleam of morning light in their cages, and flutter and beat their breasts against the wires, pining and struggling for freedom.

Before they parted, Hubert Gilford sought a few words alone with Sir William Tyndale, and he led him into the chamber which had been allotted to him in Humphrey Monmouth's house. Here Hubert poured out all his hopes and fears, his unworthiness of, and his exceeding love for, Karina Mountjoy. There seemed to be an earnestness in him which was full of promise, and as he knelt to receive the blessing, William Tyndale prayed over him with fervour, that he might be preserved from all evil that might assault and hurt soul or body, and that he might attain the fruition of his desires, and be the husband and loyal protector of Karina Mountjoy.

So they parted, but as the large iron gates closed on Hubert Gilford, William Tyndale exclaimed—

“Would that her heart had led her to an older and more steadfast husband!—but it may be that good lies in this betrothal which I cannot now see: so may God speed them.”

The next day Hubert crossed the Channel in one of the vessels which followed in the wake of the Emperor Charles, and were freighted with many of his goods and chattels, and Sir William Tyndale saw him no more.

CHAPTER XIX.

1530: SEVEN YEARS LATER.

It was again May time—a bright joyous May as far as all outward things were concerned. A sky serenely blue over-arched the busy gay city of London, while clouds sailed swan-like in the clear ether, and as they passed over the spires and battlements of the Tower and the Abbey of Westminster, cast purple shadows on the smooth surface of the unchanging river, and on the façade of noble houses and shaven lawns sloping down to its margin.

At an upper window in one of the houses in the Strand, a lady sat with a child in her arms: and a fair golden-haired boy stood by his mother's side, gazing intently on the pages of a Book which lay open in the deep window seat by which he knelt.

"Mother," he said, "I have conned the lines six times over. I have them by heart now, mother!" But twice he gently pulled the wide-hanging sleeve of his mother's gown before she turned her head from the window.

"What is it you see, mother?" the boy said, changing his position, and climbing up to bring his head on a level with hers. "Sweet mother, what do you see, that you weep?" And the boy kissed the face where a large tear was slowly trickling down.

The mother gave a short quick sob, and then said gently,—

"Take heed, Amyas; thou wilt arouse little Giulia. Let her sleep; she hath been fretful by reason of her teeth hurting her gums. Take heed! and speak quietly."

The boy obeyed, and continued his scrutiny of the river.

"The king's barge cometh, mother; and there are all the gentles and ladies attending. Why dost not thou go with them? I see father; yes, there is father! See, mother, he taketh the hand of that fine lady, and now he kisses it, and now he is hastening up the stairs."

Karina Gilford turned quickly away, and buried her face for a moment in her baby's soft clustering ringlets: then she looked up brightly at her boy.

"We must not idle, Amyas; we must do our work. Say thy task, and then thou shalt go down to the garden stairs, and watch the boats and barges with Elfrida."

"I would fain stay with thee, mother, and hear thy tale of this Book, and of him thy tutor, whose work it is. But hearken now," and the boy repeated correctly and distinctly, in a way marvellous for his six years:--

"When He sawe the people He went up into a moun-
tayne, and when He was set His disciples came unto
Him, and he opened His mouth and taught them saying,

"'Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the
kyngdom of heven.

"'Blessed are they that morne: for they shall be
comforted.

"'Blessed are the meke: for they shall inherit the
erth.

"'Blessed are they which hunger and thirst for right-
eousness: for they shall be filled.

"'Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain
mercy.

"'Blessed are the pure in herte: for they shall see
God.

"'Blessed are the maynteyners of peace: for they
shall be called the children of God.'"

Amyas stopped.

"I know not any further by heart, mother."

"Good boy; thou hast said thy task well, and get the remainder of these blessings by heart to-morrow."

"They are brave words," said the boy thoughtfully, "Why did father say I must never speak of this Book?"

"Because there have been bitter persecutions of it, and rage against him who has brought it to babes like thee, my son."

"I am no babe, mother; I am six years old, and thou shouldst see how far I hit the ball yester even. But now, tell me about the tutor—thy tutor—and all the life a long time ago, when thou wast young."

Karina smiled sadly. When she was young! She felt like her boy, that that time was very far off. And yet Karina was in the full bloom and beauty of womanhood, and there was an indescribable softness and charm about her, which we see in the faces of all true and loving mothers, whether fair or plain, gentle or simple.

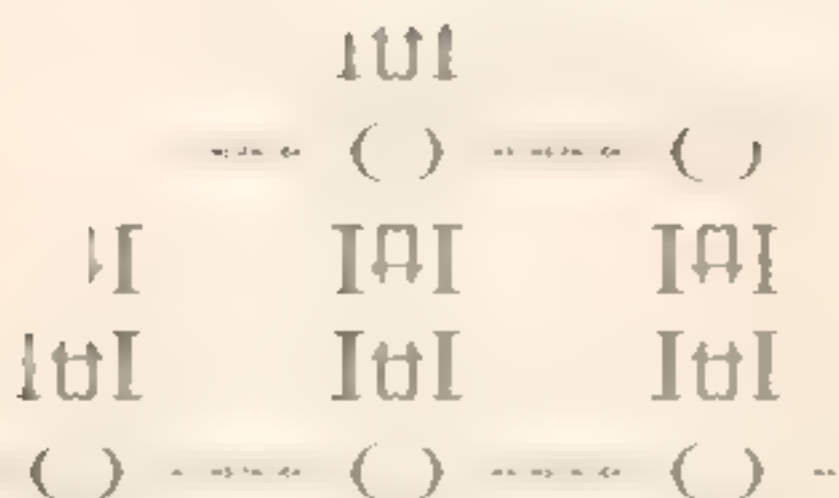
"The tutor—dear Father Tyndale—had to leave this country to carry on this great work, my boy. He has lived in various places—in Germany—at Hamburg first, then Cologne, and here this precious Book was printed. But a man who loveth not good—named Cochläus—did his best to prevent them from being sold in England, and then——"

She was interrupted, for the arras was lifted, and a tall, handsome man, dressed in the extreme of the prevailing fashion, came in.

A bright flush rose to Karina's face, but she said quietly,—

"Hast thou come from Richmond with the King's Highness?"

"Aye, have I; and notable it is that thou dost always absent thyself. It is a grave matter now. Do not smile thereat, Mistress Gilford. I shall be laying commands on



thee soon that will need to be obeyed. What hath the boy there?"

Karina was about to try and conceal the Bible, when her husband snatched it from Amyas' hand.

"What mad folly! If thou didst not lead such a nun's life, thou wouldst know that a search is made, and a penalty enforced wheresoever this Book is found. To-morrow my Lord of London is to preach concerning it at St. Paul's Cross, and there will be a grand bonfire. Wilt thou like to see it, Amyas? I will take thee, and thou shalt pitch this Book into the flames."

"Never!" said the child stoutly. "Never! It is my mother's dear and best Book."

"Dost speak to me in that fashion?" and Hubert Gilford, who was in an ill temper, struck the boy pretty sharply across the arm with the heavy cumbrous volume. Amyas looked straight at his father, but did not shrink, though his little chest heaved with suppressed tears, and the tone of his father's high-pitched angry voice awoke little Giulia, who began to cry.

At this moment a tall fair girl, in a red kirtle and upper dress of pure white linen, appeared.

"Shall I not tend the baby, madam?" she asked.

"Yes; and do thou go with Elfrida, Amyas, and feed the swans."

She bent to kiss him, and he whispered, "Was I brave, mother?"

"My own brave boy!" was the low reply, and then the children and their nurse departed.

Meantime Hubert, a little ashamed of his want of self-control, had thrown himself on one of the cushioned window seats, where he had replaced the Bible.

"Thou must come to Court with me, fair wife, this afternoon; there are to be grand doings, and a great

show of the new Morris dancers in the Square before Westminster. So don thy best attire and come."

"Thou knowest, Hubert," was the gentle reply, "I would not disobey thee had I not a cause. I cannot come and see the Mistress Anne Boleyn in the place of my late mistress, the Queen. It is forbidden me in the Holy Book, by which so little store is set."

"Nay, thou art wrong there. Mistress Anne Boleyn has read the Book, and Mistress Gaynsford tells the tale to all the world. The Cardinal may have proscribed it, but fair Mistress Gaynsford lent it to her lover, and so it got round to the Cardinal, and so to the King's Highness, and Mistress Anne prizes it! Fear not that she is against the Book. If Wolsey hates it, she loves it; his hate will make her love anything."

"Thou knowest it is not only the question of the precious Book!" Karina said, and now she drew nearer to her husband, and laid her hand on his shoulder. "It is that my heart burneth with indignation for the wronged wife, at the scandal in high places caused by this lady, Anne Boleyn. For verily, Hubert, it is not the outside of aught that can do our souls good. It is this, that Father Tyndale taught, and it is this, which lies at the core of all preaching; it is this, which the open Bible teaches us."

"Prythee, do not preach, Karina," and Hubert yawned.

"I do not often open my lips," Karina said sadly. "So seldom do I see thee alone."

"If seldom, it is thy own fault, sitting mewed up here with thy children."

"*Thy* children also, Hubert. Say, hast thou quite forgot the old days—that first May time of our wedded love—when we rode through all the fair country of Gloucestershire, and the blue hyacinths were making

another sky of the woodlands? Dost thou quite forget how, in the lucid weeks before her death, dear Joan prayed thee ever to remember the words of our dear tutor, and how thou didst promise her to do her behest? And, Hubert, on that day when we heard of Amyas' death, and our boy was to be the heir of his worldly substance, didst thou not vow afresh to strive to follow on in the straight way? And I was then sufficient for thy need, as when thou didst first vow thy love to me in the yew-tree walk. Ah, husband, dear Hubert, let us cling to each other and the children, and this Book, and leave the naughty Court and go—where our dear Father Tyndale has gone—over the sea to foreign lands!”

There are few men who, after the first flush of love and admiration is past, especially when these are based simply on externals, can bear to be reminded of their shortcomings. Hubert Gilford hated to be told that he had failed to fulfil his promise: that after the first two years of marriage, good resolutions had vanished like mists of morning. The gay atmosphere of the Court, the interest of watching the progress of the King's unlawful love for Anne Boleyn, the gossips and the scandals and the quarrels of those in high places, amused him. The companionship of his wife was far less attractive, nay dull. She cared not for the frivolity in which he found pleasure, and though she was about the Court occasionally for a few months, her refined and cultivated nature recoiled from much that she was associated with. Intrigues and bold disregard of all that was pure and of good report disgusted her; and since the birth of her second child, her little Giulia, delicate health had been a sufficient excuse for absenting herself.

Hubert Gilford was now rendered independent by his brother Amyas' death, and he had a share in the

business which had been so successfully carried on, and which two active partners continued to conduct advantageously.

All this prosperity was very unwholesome for a character like his. The serious impressions which had apparently worked so great a change when he was first a suitor for Karina's hand at Sodbury, wore off. He was now as pleasure-loving, gay, and careless as any man of thirty could be. He was proud of Karina when she was dressed in all the grand things he loved, and proud when the King one day praised her beauty, and laughed when his Majesty added, "But she hath a heart of ice, and a frozen dignity, caught no doubt from the Princess of Wales, the widow of our good brother. No need to set a watch on her; she can guard herself without that." And then the King, having "tweaked Hubert's ear" rather more sharply than was pleasant, went off to crack some broad jokes with the Duke of Norfolk, who looked on all Court beauties with jealous mistrust, fearing they might eclipse the lustre of his daughter's charms in the King's eyes.

"Well," Hubert Gilford said, "don thy best robe, and come with me to-day. I have an especial reason. There is no one who can outshine thee at thy best, and that thou very well knowest, in my eyes. But I am a poor mortal sinner, and thou art an angel. Faith, methinks some sinners are good company nevertheless." He laughed merrily, but Karina could not laugh.

"I will obey thee, Hubert," she said, "if thou wilt promise to let me keep this Book; thou wilt surely not command me to destroy it."

"Well, it is new methinks for wives to make obedience dependent on this thing and that. Go and make thyself ready with all speed."

A servant now appeared bearing a letter which he presented to Karina.

"A royal barge waits, Madam," he said, "and the answer is instantly required."

"It is from the Queen's Highness," Karina said; "I must obey her command. She bids me to come to Greenwich and abide for one night."

"Queen!" Hubert muttered. "Queen forsooth! Well, I can tell thee it is the last time *that* Queen will summon thee!"

"Doth the messenger wait?" Karina asked.

"Two of the Queen's gentlemen are below to conduct you to a royal barge, Madam."

"Bid them welcome in the hall," Karina said, "and see that they have wherewith to refresh themselves, and I will be in readiness in half an hour's space."

Karina's waiting woman swiftly put her lady into travelling condition, and in less time than she had specified, she was passing across the smooth grass to the river, where her two children were watching the barges and feeding the stately swans—then a feature of the Thames, and much in request for their down, while the young cygnets were thought a delicacy for the table.

Amyas ran up to his mother, undismayed by the grand footmen who preceded her to the barge.

"I would I could come also, sweet mother," he said.

"Stand back, Amyas," said his father, who was strolling down behind the procession formed by his wife and her attendants. "Stand back. Where are your manners? forsooth, like a ploughboy's."

"Tend them carefully, Elfrida," Karina said, "and see that the little Giulia is in the fresh air again in the afterpart of the day. Fare you well, my doves."

"Tarry not, Karina; tarry not," Hubert said, as he

stood at the stairs' head to hand his beautiful wife into the barge. His eye dwelt on her with pride as the barge bore her away, and he bowed and kissed his hand with the grace which came to him so naturally.

"Mother looketh like a queen to-day," sighed Amyas; "but I love best to see her not so grand."

His father did not reply. Some twinges of conscience were unpleasant, as he remembered how different their married life was to what he had promised it should be.

"She is too high and good for me," he thought. "The Briar Rose would have suited me better. How she would have pleased herself with all their gay bright doings! Aye, verily, life is but a plaguy business from first to last. What sayest thou, Elfrida Bragge? Hand me the child," and Hubert raised the little girl in his arms and kissed her fondly. She was all smiles and sparkling animation, toying with her father's beard, and laughing in infantile merriment as he tossed her high above his head.

"There, go back to thy nurse, little fairy," he said; "tell her and her mistress to smile, and not mope about the world like nuns." And then the gay young father lounged back to the house, calling his man to come and equip him for the King's banquet at Westminster.

Meantime, the barge was rapidly skimming the water to Greenwich, and on arriving, Karina was ushered to the room where the Queen's waiting-women were assembled.

Karina was known to most of them, and one who was called Marguerite, rose to greet her and conduct her into the Queen's private chamber.

Queen Katherine was seated in one of the recessed windows looking out on the river, not idly, for a skein of red silk was round her neck, and she was drawing

her needle through a piece of embroidery for an altar frontal.

A smile of welcome passed over the worn features of the Queen as Karina knelt and kissed her hand.

"It is good to see you, Mistress Gilford," she said, "and you find me as my Lord Cardinal found me—at work with my needle. It is a marvellous good cure for sore hearts. The children—how do they fare? Be seated, Karina; see, take yon tabouret, and draw near me, that I may look into your face, and you in mine. You came not unwillingly?"

"Nay, my gracious lady; it is a joy to come at your bidding. Would I could render you dutiful service."

"You frequent not the Court, now; and it is well. No good thing is to be learned by the conduct of many fluttering there. It would be well if your husband frequented it less."

The hot colour rushed to Karina's face, and the Queen laid her hand gently on the bowed head.

"Is thine the common lot of women also? May the blessed Lord pity and comfort thee. I sent for thee touching several matters. I have grieved to know thou hast been bitten by the heresy now rampant. I would fain warn thee that all the English Testaments done into English by William Tyndale are to be burned at St. Paul's Cross to-morrow. I counsel thee, for thy soul's sake and thy children's sake, to fling into the burning pile a copy which I hear thou hast in thy possession. It is loving counsel, Karina. I have watched thee from a child; thy mother served me well, and woe is me that I brought her to this cruel England to die broken-hearted. Like mistress, like maid. By the love I bore thy mother, I conjure thee to give up that Book, which can be but hurtful, and will surely work out thy ruin."

"Dearest lady, and gracious Queen, I cannot yield up that Book; but I know full well if I did, it would soon be replaced. Think you, gracious Queen, that others will not pour in to fill the void left by those which are destroyed? Sweet lady, let me pray you not to condemn me for loving the Holy Gospels of the Lord, writ in the tongue my father spake, the tongue which my children and husband speak!"

"These are perplexed and troublous times," the Queen said. "I grant, those in high places in the Church act as though the Gospels had never been writ in Greek or Latin forsooth. Many traps and nets are laid for me, Karina; but I would not be other than I am—a daughter of the Holy Catholic Church; there rests my hope."

"Ah dearest madam," Karina said, "I would you had heard from his own lips the words of Sir William Tyndale."

"Hush," said the Queen sternly, "I care not to name him; he is an ill-conditioned fellow, and abhorred by all the faithful."

"Ah, no, your Grace, he has lived a fair and godly life; he has eaten sparingly, and worn the humblest garments; he is a scholar, and full of ripe learning and humour; and why should he be driven from the realm? Why should the Lord Cardinal watch every ship by his agents, if by chance it bringeth over the Word of Life? Why should they seek to destroy such a work?"

"I may not speak more of this," said the Queen haughtily. "It is to warn you of your danger in possessing one of these Books that I sent for you, and I am instead thereof hearing you make a saint of this heretic. But," and the Queen clasped her hands, and her voice changed to one of exceeding pathos, "I have other things

to speak of. Karina, they have hunted me down; they have brought the poor deer to bay. I have to appear once again with the King at Windsor, and after that I must withdraw myself from him, and for ever. They have made me their prey, and the crafty one who has ruled the realm instead of my Lord the King, has compassed my downfall, but has by so doing set up his bitterest foe. I cannot name her; may the Lord have mercy on her, for she will sorely need it. And her own downfall is not far distant. I mind me of the words of the fair Margaret, Duchess of Alençon, who when told that she might, were I divorced, take my place, exclaimed,—‘Had I no other objection, I would not so break the heart of the Queen Katherine.’ Do hearts break, Karina Gilford? Methinks not, or mine would have ceased to beat and to love long ago. I shall, I fear me, lose my child as well as my husband; they will take her from me and my teaching; they will declare her illegitimate, and shut her out from the succession. Say, Karina, do not I seem in thy eyes a woman who might envy the humblest cotter’s wife?”

“My heart aches for you, gracious lady. Would that I could pour balm into the wound. There are words which rise to my lips if your Highness will hear them.”

“Say on,” said the Queen, her face settling into the rigid melancholy which characterises it in the portraits of her, in later life. Then Karina repeated the words of comfort, as they stood in that Epistle of St. Peter, copied by the hand of William Tyndale, and long since committed to heart from the now well-worn parchment on which it was written:—

“Derly beloved, be not troubled in this heate, which nowe is come amonge you to trye you, as though some strange thyng had happened unto you; but rejoyce in as

moche as ye are parte-takers of Christes passions, that when His glory apereth, ye may be mery and gladde.

"Wherefore, let them that suffer accordynge to the will of God, committ their soules to Hym with well doing, as unto a faithfull Creator."

"They are brave words," Queen Katherine sighed. "Who spake them?"

"The Holy Apostle Saint Peter," was the reply.

"I thought as much, for I have read them in the Latin! Yes, they are good words; but verily, the heat which is come to try me *is sore*, and I smart therefrom."

"Perchance there are many hearts in low rank as sore hurt as yours, gracious lady. Would you not that they should draw from this Well of Comfort, and in a tongue they can understand?"

Queen Katherine smiled.

"Thou art a rare clever and subtle pleader," she said. "Let the common folks go to the priest, and let him break for them the bread of life. They cannot do this for themselves. Now divert me by telling me of thy boy. Is he tractable and well-conditioned?"

"He filleth my heart with joy," Karina said. "I have been sick for many months, and his pretty ways endeared him more and more to my heart. And his little sister is as a flower of beauty."

"God hath been good to thee in this. Had *I* a living son my plight might not be so sorry. Now thou shalt rest in thy chamber, or wander in the pleasaunce, which is fair and bright with flowers to-day, and then, after supper, thou shalt take the mandoline, and sing to me some old Spanish ditties that thy mother sang, which will bring back the beauty of my native mountains, on which my eyes will ne'er look again."

The evening passed as the Queen desired. The Prin-

cess Mary was present, and the ladies also. Karina Gilford heard the subject of the intercepted Bibles discussed, and in after years recalled the face and voice of the then youthful Mary, as she said,—

“They will burn the Books to ashes to-morrow, at St. Paul’s Cross. Would I might be there to see, for it will be a sight which shall make the faithful give thanks for God’s mercy. Oh! *I would* I were there to see!”

The dull grey eyes flashed as she spoke, and the thin compressed lips quivered with the strength of her feelings as she added,—

“And there be some that say, good mother mine, that till those who love this English Testament burn with it, there will be no peace for the Church or this realm.”

“Speak not so rashly and so hotly, my Lady Mary,” interposed one of the ladies.

“Nay, rebuke her not for righteous wrath,” said the Queen; “and now let us be solaced by some of thy lays, Mistress Gilford, to drive away, if it may be, these sad and baleful thoughts.”

CHAPTER XX.

THROUGH THE FIRES.

WHEN Karina returned the next day, she was met by Elfrida with a grave face, and she exclaimed,—

“What ails the children, Elfrida?”

“It is not the children, madam; they are safe. But this morning early, two priests came, holding a warrant to search the house, and a messenger bearing the badge of my lord the Bishop of London came with them.”

“Thy master! was he at home?”

“Nay, madam; he has not returned from Westminster.

They searched in every nook and cranny, and at first I was hopeful they would go away empty-handed; but at last one raised the lid of the coffer by the window, and then they discovered the precious Book."

"They have taken away the Book, mother," Amyas said; "they have taken it away to burn it, and the priest held his hands cross-wise over it, and muttered and mumbled like poor old Rob in the hospital. It was so dreadful to see the Book torn away. I made a tough fight for it, mother, and held it fast; but what could I do with the strong grip of a grown man?"

"What, indeed, my son! Well, Amyas, take heart. That Book, that dear precious Book, sent me by the hand of the Hamburg merchant, direct from our dear tutor, may perish, but there will be more ere long. Take heart, dear boy." For Amyas, who had felt himself worsted in his struggle for his mother's most precious possession, could scarcely restrain his sobs.

The baby Giulia, who had stretched out her arms to her mother with delight, was cooing and laughing, all unconscious of trouble.

Other servants came into the room to tell the news that every one was flocking to the Cross, and that they would like to join the crowd, for the Bishop was to preach exceeding well to the people. Before Karina could decide whether or not to grant permission, Hubert Gilford's step was heard.

"This is a pretty thing," he exclaimed:—"The news that a Bible was found in my home has reached the Court. I'll have none of this evil talk about it. Gibes and scoffs forsooth, because I have a wife who sets me at nought! Thou must come with me, post haste, to the Cross, and show thyself there as present at the burning of the Books: and you, boy, come also. The streets are

so thronged—crowds winding up Ludgate and along the side of the Chepe—there is no time to lose. The barge will take us down part way, and I will have the fellows there with thy palfrey, on which thou canst ride with the boy. Nay, not a word: I warrant I'll have my way for once."

"I am but lately returned from Greenwich. I am tried and faint."

"Some wine will soon revive thee," and Hubert tossed off a silver goblet full of canary, which stood on a buffet, and turning to the footman, said, "Fill up another, you knave, for your mistress."

"Hubert, you may go and see the cruel flames burn up the Books, but I go *not* thither to the Cross."

There was a fire in her dark eyes now, and Hubert quailed a little. An oath was hissed out, as he said,—

"And I say, you *do* go!"

"Let not us have unseemly wrangles in the presence of others," Karina said, glancing at the servants. "I pray you peace."

"No peace unless you do as I bid you," was the reply. "Take your own way and rue it."

Then leading Amyas by the hand, he said, "Come boy, or we be too late."

"Oh! take him not into so thick a crowd. What if burning sparks light on him; take him not, Hubert."

"Come then thyself, and see to him; he is no milk-sop."

"Father," Amyas said, "I pray you let me stay near my mother."

But opposition only made Hubert Gilford more obstinate. He had been riled by the scoffing tone in which his wife had been spoken of as one of the "heretics," who held the Book as a charm, and could not understand a word of it.

People suspected of hiding the Bible were to be brought to answer the charge publicly. The strictest discipline was to be enforced. There were whispers of trades ruined, and underground machinations at work against those who dared to lift up their voices in defence of the written Word and its circulation amongst the people.

Good Humphrey Monmouth was now under suspicion, for the help he had given Tyndale, and for his protests against the errors of Rome, and what really touched the hearts of the people more than these—the arrogance and assumption of state and all the accessories of wealth which those who held high offices in the Church affected. Cardinal Wolsey had set the example of haughty bearing and insolent disregard of the needs of those about him. His long gay retinue when he went abroad on the mule, with its gorgeous trappings, became an offence: the orange held to his nose, that he might not breathe the air infected with the common people: his cold keen glance around him as he passed—these things were become distasteful to the English people; for dearly as they loved a Royal pageant, a priestly one, when one figure was supreme, became intolerable.

The foreign emissaries from the Papal Court, who were perpetually appearing in the matter of the divorce, with all their scarlet and purple and jewels and state, were tolerated; but there was in English hearts a thrill of disgust that one of themselves, a “butcher dog,” as the Emperor’s *bon mot* had it, should scorn the very “hole of the pit whence he was digged.”

There can be no doubt that the beautiful and majestic simplicity of Sir Thomas More’s life, which many saw, and of which many more heard, in his Chelsea home, went far to endear him to the very hearts that turned from Wolsey with loathing in these the last days of his

waning power: while many were ready to cry with the King's brother-in-law, the Duke of Suffolk, "No good had ever befallen England since Cardinals had come there!"

Wolsey was far away from the great fire at St. Paul's Cross, which was to dim the brightness of the May sunshine. Troubles had thickened on him. Anne Boleyn hated him, and as he knew, planned his ruin, and he departed to his northern diocese of York, leaving the splendour of his princely mansion on the bank of the Thames for ever. But he had proscribed the Bible, and condemned Tyndale as a rank heretic: so that he may be said to have been present in spirit when the hated Book was consumed by fire, while the Bishop of London fulminated his anathemas against it.

The promenade in the middle aisle of the old cathedral of St. Paul's was generally filled with London citizens, who went thither at this hour to saunter and gossip and transact business! But to-day, this fourth day of May, 1530, the aisle was empty, while every avenue to the Cross was blocked up with the throngs who were attracted thither, like the people of Athens long ago, some of them scarcely knowing why they were brought together.

Hubert Gilford lifted his boy in his arms, and set him high above the heads of the people on a stone coping of a wall which abutted on the Square. There was a goodly number of men about the Court who saw Hubert and the boy, and whispered one to the other that his wife had a Book hidden away, and she would not come out to show herself. There were gay ladies there, as well as gentlemen: and one with bold, black eyes, nodded and smiled at Hubert Gilford, and motioned him to come nearer to the raised platform, where many sat to hear Dean Colet and others preach on Sunday afternoon.

"Wilt go to that pretty lady, Amyas, or stay here?" asked his father.

"Stay here; she is not pretty. It is the same lady my mother watched from the barge yester morning. She is——"

Amyas had no time for more. There was a sudden movement in the crowd, and a sound of priests' and boys' voices chanting, as a procession moved across the yard, the Bishop bringing up the rear, a huge crucifix borne before him, at sight of which many of the crowd who could from the press do so, fell on their knees.

Bishop Tonstall could raise his voice on occasion, and speak as a scholar, and did not lack eloquence. He denounced the translation of the Holy Scriptures as corrupt, abhorred of his Majesty the King, and forbidden on pain of punishment to be bought, read, or used in the realm.

"They are corrupted by one William Tyndale," the Bishop said. "Ye all know me to have a small inkling of the Greek, and I protest to you this man hath wrested the text to his own fancy, which we have many learned men to prove. He hath consorted with that arch-heretic at Wittemberg concerning it, and when two such meet to devise mischief, who shall tell how black is the dye? I say to you, brethren, detest and abhor these Scriptures. Keep them not in your hands; deliver them to the superiors, such as call for them.

"This I move and exhort you in God's name to do; this is your duty to do; this ye ought to do; or being obstinate or denying and refusing this to do, the prelates of the Church, having the charge and care of your souls, ought to compel you, and your Prince to punish and correct you, not doing the same, unto whom St. Paul saith the sword is given by God's ordinance for that purpose.

"It has sometimes seemed proper for the Word of God to be circulated, while at other times it has been deemed needful for it to be restrained, and the King, taking into consideration all circumstances, thinketh in his conscience that the divulging of the Scripture at this time in the English tongue to be committed to the people, should rather be to their further confusion and destruction than the edification of their souls.

"We cannot require or demand Scriptures to be divulged in the English tongue, otherwise than upon the discretion of the superiors: so as whensoever they think in their consciences that it may do you good, they may and do well to give it to you."*

And now, after a longer exordium than can be written here, after much eloquent pleading and gesture, the Bishop solemnly called upon some priests and friars to set light to the pile of wood and shavings which had been prepared below the Cross, and summon all good and faithful children of the Holy Catholic Church, in the name of His Holiness, to cast into it the Book, which had been denounced as baleful, evil, and dangerous to the souls of those who read it.

Then, the crowd standing back, the work of destruction began. Men, bending under the weight of the heavy volumes, which they brought in sacks, came forward and hurled them like so many blocks of wood into the flames, the soldiers standing by, and stirring the furnace with their halberds, retreating every now and then, half suffocated by the fumes of burning covers and paper.

Men and women were seen to hurry to the place and cast in a Book, one by one. An old, grey-haired veteran, as he did so, kissed the precious Book before he parted

* The original MS. from whence this is taken is in Lambeth library.

with it. Children, led by their mothers, threw in their New Testaments. Some were weeping, some laughing, some clapping their hands as the flames leaped up, and the conflagration grew apace.

Little Amyas Gilford had a good view from his post of observation, and he watched all that passed with grave and earnest attention. In the child's heart there was a sore pain, more for his mother than himself, and he wondered if all those benedictions he had learned from what his mother called her precious Book, could apply to that heated, excited crowd—priests and friars and bishops and great men—all vowing vengeance on that Book, all ready to add fuel to the fire.

"Sit still, Amyas," his father said; "stir not till I return. I am crossing the yard to speak a word to yon nobles and ladies. I will return quickly, and when the crowd is cleared I will take thee to Westminster, and thou shalt have a brave feast."

Amyas made a feeble remonstrance. "Father, let me go home."

"Nay, nay; rest quiet. There are several of our people hard by," and Hubert made a sign to one of his servants, that he had left Amyas at his post on the wall. So dense was the crowd that it was impossible for this man to reach Amyas, but he waved his cap reassuringly, and Amyas nodded and smiled in reply.

The wind had been rising for the last half-hour, and was now blowing a strong breeze from the river. The smoke and flames were driven with more and more force towards the corner where Amyas sat, and the crowd lessened in consequence. The smoke made the child's eyes water painfully, and he felt suffocated by the heat: but he had been ordered by his father to sit still, and he did not move.

At last his position became so painful that he cried out to the tall man-servant, who was yet parted from him by a closely-packed crowd to the right; but his voice did not reach him. The man was like every one else, occupied with the Book which was just then being consigned to the flames. It had been bound in crimson velvet and had gold clasps, and was said to belong to a person of high rank about the Court.

"Oh! father, I can't see! I can't——" The little cry was stifled, for a great cloud of smoke, thick and suffocating, wrapped Amyas round with its baleful breath. In turning his head to try and avoid it, choked and bewildered, the boy fell from the wall, and would soon have been trampled to death—had not the man, who had heard a cry, and turning missed the child from his position, made his way towards the spot, and though with great difficulty, succeeded in raising Amyas in his arms.

For a moment or two the interest of the nearest bystanders in the corner of the Square was diverted from the burning pile. "He is dead!" cried one; and another exclaimed, "He is choked with the pother. It's enow to poison any one. Who'd thought the burning Books could stink like that!"

Other eyes than the servant's had missed the child from his place. Hubert Gilford was seen pushing every one aside, and elbowing his way to the spot with a white face. The sight of the boy, lying motionless across the man's shoulder, sent a sharp pang through his heart.

"His mother! his mother!" he exclaimed in a voice of agony. "Give the boy to me:" and taking the child from the servant's arms, who followed with the others of his household who had been gazing at the fire, he bore him away.

Karina roused herself from her sadness after Amyas and his father were gone, and calling Elfrida Bragge, bid her bring her distaff and wheel, and let little Giulia play on the oaken floor.

"The rushes are sadly withered," Karina said. "I would I could go forth and gather some fresh ones from the low meadow under Stinchcombe Hill."

Giulia rolled about baby fashion, and Elfrida now and then threw a ball for her to creep after.

"Thou hast no home longings, Elfrida," said her mistress.

"No, dear madam; that is, I love to be near you and serve you, and my father's second wife doth not need me. Methinks I would love once more to look at the golden pathway again in the dear church, where the good Father Tyndale first spoke to me of the pathway of life."

"Ay, Elfrida; our dear Joan loved to speak of that. It is near seven years since we saw her pass behind the veil into the Golden City, of which Saint John telleth. She lies at rest, our sweet Joan. But I love to think of those last peaceful weeks when her spirit was lying so calm at the foot of the blessed Cross. She is safe where none can touch or harm her. We would not bring her back to this toilsome world. I would like to see the Manor again. Hark, there is the porter's knock! Run, Elfrida, and see who demandeth admittance."

Elfrida departed on her mission, and Karina took the child in her arms, covering her with kisses.

"My little one, my dove, thou art thy mother's fair flower. Thy brother is her noble protector; he beginneth already to take care of his mother, though scarcely six years old. Ah me!"

With her baby in her arms, the light of maternal love

shining in her dark eyes, she might have stood for the Madonna of the Sistine Chapel, which was then so fresh from the master's hand. A heavy manly tread heard on the stairs made her turn her head with a wistful questioning air, and there in the doorway stood John Huchyns-Tyndale. The brightest flush of welcome spread itself over Karina's face, as she advanced towards him with the words:—

"Here is a true friend of thy mother's, Bambina mia. Greet him."

John Huchyns controlled himself with a strong effort. Often as he had schooled himself for this first meeting with the only woman he had ever loved, he recovered himself with great difficulty.

When the flush of welcome had died away, his eye detected at once the lines of sorrow and disappointment on that beautiful face.

"She is not happy," were the words that almost rose to his lips.

"We bid you welcome, indeed, Master Huchyns," Karina hastened to say, "to the great city. My husband is abroad, but will return ere long. Give me good tidings of Mistress Katherine, and my dear kinsfolk at Sodbury."

"There is not much change in our parts save that change which time brings. My sister is well, and a better manager of cattle and pasturage than I am!" he said with a smile. "Wolf is getting into years, and is grey about the muzzle. My pet falcon, Fan Fan, is dead."

He went on with these details hurriedly, to hide the deep emotion at his heart.

"At Sodbury Manor all are well. Sir John rides with the best, and they are ever widening their hospitalities. Dame Cicely Lee bears her dignity well as lady at Yate

Manor. Poor Giles is not a whit lighter in mind or body—a huge cumbrous fellow, but with a true heart. Harry is a vagrant. I have no good news of him to give you, I fear me.”

“And what was your latest tidings of your kinsman, the dear Father William Tyndale?”

“Aye, that is what I came hither to seek; and the first sight that meets me is a great smoke and fire hard by St. Paul’s; and when I ask the cause, they tell me it is the burning of the Book which William Tyndale hath writ from the Greek. Methinks it foreshadows other fires, for I hear say that all those who possess a Testament are ‘suspects,’ and under the ban of the Church.”

“It is even so,” Karina said, with a sigh. “They say that one Packington hath so managed that all the Books are bought up; but the more they burn them the more will they live. There is no putting out the Light which God hath kindled.”

“Thou art still open in the confession of thy opinions,” John Huchyns said. “Art thou not afraid?”

“I have no fear,” was the answer. “I have learned now that the way of peace and holiness is not in the ways of luxurious priests and proud cardinals; nay, it lieth wheresoever the steps of the faithful and trusting ones who love His Holy Word are found. This very day my precious Book hath been seized, and is now burned to ashes. But I shall have another:” and she added exultingly, “There are many and many beauteous passages written in my heart, and they cannot burn them out.”

John Huchyns shook his head.

“I would have you careful, Mistress Karina Gilford. No need to hang out a badge to your peril, unless——”

“Unless I am challenged thereto; then, an I had to

mount yon pile with the Book, I would not deny my faith; and save for my two sweet children——”

She stopped, lest her words betrayed what all women true of heart would hide from the curious eyes of the outer world. True the eyes which now lingered with a world of sympathy upon her face were not curious, but none the less did she shrink from personal topics. Skillfully she turned the talk into another channel: and John Huchyns told her that he too was in possession of a Bible, brought to Inclyff by a pedlar:—“a real pedlar this time; not a mock one,” he said. But the words had no sooner been spoken than they were repented, for Karina flinched as if touched in a tender place, and she said coldly,—

“And did you purchase a Book, Master Huchyns-Tyndale?”

“Nay, it was a gift from the hand of my kinsman; the man had received several from him, and he was charged to convey them to the Manor and to Inclyff. I know not whether Dame Marjory accepted one or not. This man had seen our kinsman at Cologne, and reported well of him in health, though he said he looked spare and lean. The books were brought over in bales of flax, and so escaped seizure.”

“They are coming now,” Karina exclaimed; “that is my husband’s step; that is—no; I hear not my boy’s.” She started to her feet, and hearing the murmur of voices, she stood with her dark eyes wide open, in an attitude of expectation. Little Giulia would have fallen from her mother’s arms had not John Huchyns caught her.

“What say they?” she exclaimed with bated breath. “What?”

And yet she could not advance a step; fear rooted her to the spot.

It was Elfrida who, hearing the voices and feet on the stairs, went out from the adjoining room to discover what it meant.

"Oh! my mistress, my dear mistress!" she cried, as Hubert Gilford came up with a rigid set face, bearing in his arms the senseless form of his only son, little Amyas.

"You have killed him! you have killed him!" Karina said in a cold hard tone, more terrible to hear than any passionate outcry of grief. "Oh! you have killed him, Hubert Gilford. Ah, me! may God forgive you, for my bitter cup is now filled to the brim."

"Karina, Karina, I would have died sooner. Would that I had died instead of the boy."

Sir Harry Gilford, who had been summoned, now came up with one of the King's physicians, and the doorway was thronged with servants and attendants.

"Stand back! Stand back!" the physician said; "the boy yet lives."

At these words Karina's self-possession returned, her face relaxed, and holding out her arms, she said,—

"If he liveth, give him to me."

They laid him on her lap as she sat on the wide window seat, and his bright hair fell over his mother's arms like a shower of gold.

"He is stunned. He hath caught a sharp blow on the head. Give air and water and he will revive. Loosen his garments and unfasten his ruff." For poor little Amyas was attired in the stiff fashion of the time—a huge ruff surmounting his tight doublet and narrow sleeves, over which a cape, far too cumbrous and heavy, hung in folds.

Some minutes of suspense followed: then there was a quivering of the white lids, and the fringed lashes were

raised. The blue eyes sought his mother's, and, recognising her, Amyas smiled.

"Mother," he said faintly; "mother, 'Bless—ed—are—the maynteyners—of peace.'"

"What saith he?" asked his grandfather. "Sweet boy, what saith he?"

"Words from the Holy Gospel of Saint Matthew," said a deep voice—that of John Huchyns.

"Peace," repeated little Amyas dreamily, "peace."

He spake no more, and died with a smile on his lips ere midnight had been tolled out from the towers of the City churches.

The Books were burned, and the Bishop in his palace rejoiced. But mightier than the word of kings was the Word of the Lord; and though the Books were consumed, that Word lived, and "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings" was "perfected praise."

"Alas, poor mother! alas, dear boy!" sighed out the grandfather, who had been proud of the child.

"Say not, alas, poor boy!" said John Huchyns, "for methinks he is delivered from the evil to come."

CHAPTER XXI.

ANTWERP.

THE May sunshine was lying on the broad Scheldt, and the great Cathedral of Antwerp was bathed in light, when a ship put in at the harbour, and a tall, well-built man, with but a small allowance of baggage, walked up the broad street to the house in the Place to which he was directed, where many English merchants congregated—a house which answers to the *Pension* and hotel of to-day, and resorted to as a common dwelling-house for

men who came to Antwerp on business connected with its satin and stuff manufactures, then freely imported by our merchants as being in great demand for the Court finery of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn.

John Huchyn's heart was heavy within him. He had again undertaken a quest for Karina, and this time it was to find his kinsman William Tyndale, and bear to him by word of mouth the tidings of Karina's sorrow, and to discover if it were possible for her to take refuge in Antwerp from all the harrassing matters which now gathered round her, in addition to the overwhelming grief which her boy's death had caused her.

This house of English merchants was kept by a good man named Thomas Pointz, and from him John Huchyns knew that he should hear where William Tyndale was to be found.

He stepped into the quadrangle, round which the house was built, and inquired at the porter's lodge for one William Tyndale.

"He does not abide here now," said the man; "he has a chamber in a lower part of the town, near the river; but he calls here frequently, and if you take up your abode here, you may chance to see him. Are you in the employ of any London merchant?"

"Nay, I am simply a traveller," was the reply. "I pray you show me a small chamber, and provide me with a meal before I go out on my quest."

The man called a servant, who shouldered John Huchyns' travelling-pouch, and eyed him from head to foot.

"These be days when we may well demand name and business," the servant said. "You are from England?"

"From Inclyff, in the county of Gloucester—John Huchyns is my name."

"Huchyns! why he that hath been sending books to London beareth that name with another. You must needs see the master of this house before proceeding further."

And then John Huchyns was ushered into a small room on the side opposite to the porter's lodge, and bid to wait there till Master Thomas Pointz was summoned.

There was a great deal of chattering in the quadrangle—people going and coming—Dutch and Flemish, all talking at once—bales of goods piled up against the wall—English merchants completing some bargain, or protesting against overcharges.

All this John Huchyns could see from the basement window where he stood. English was freely spoken, and he heard one merchant say, as he clapped a big package labelled, Master Humphrey Monmouth, London Bridge and East Chepe,—

"Methinks there may be Bibles packed there—a dozen at least!"

"Nay, nay," laughed another, "Packington hath managed that packing, once for all. Didst hear the tidings that they have burned all Will Tyndale's books till they all but set fire to the church of St. Paul's and the houses near, and scorched the tip of my Lord Bishop of London's nose with the rest?"

A loud peal of laughter followed this not very witty joke: and then there was a hush, for William Tyndale himself came into the quadrangle.

He was thinner and sparer than of old, and his face was more deeply lined; but none could mistake him—there was something exceptional in the bearing of this exceptional man. It was the dignity and calm repose of one who is pursuing a lofty aim, and is not disturbed by anything outside it. It was the dignity of a single-hearted desire to work for the glory of God and the good

of man, in the way which seemed to him the best way. Thus kings might condemn him, and prelates conspire to destroy him—a brilliant and able scholar like Sir Thomas More might level against him the battery of his unequalled raillery, and lay to his charge faults of scholarship and errors of judgment—none of these things moved him—he would go on with the amendments and perpetual revision of his work, and leave it with entire confidence to God.

About this time, perhaps, it was that he allowed his pen to be betrayed into some bitterness and rancour in “The Wicked Mammon,” and “The Practice of Prelates.” He was, without doubt, hardly pressed and assailed; and we cannot wonder if, like the great prophet and warrior of old, he wrote and spake “unadvisedly,” and somewhat forgot in these books the cardinal point of the Christian faith, that love alone can overcome evil, and that to meet bitterness with bitterness is but to multiply sins. In no instance is this more strikingly set forth than in the case of Tyndale’s great opponent, Sir Thomas More. In all matters of private and public life so sweet, lovable, and courteous—full of wit and pleasantries which were as the salt of all society where he was to be found, firm as a rock in resisting the will of a tyrant whose religious profession was too often but the cloke whereby he hid his sinful, selfish, and covetous aims, yet he could lash the waters of controversial criticism with so strong and pitiless a hand, that a storm was raised which might have wrecked William Tyndale’s work, had it not been securely anchored whence it was impossible for it to drift away.

William Tyndale was greeted by the bystanders kindly, and several bid him sup with them at the common table that evening.

“Master Pointz would bid you welcome.”

"A countryman of yours, Father Tyndale, has lately arrived," the porter said. "He is waiting an interview with Master Pointz in his room."

And as the man spoke, John Huchyns came out into the quadrangle, and the two kinsmen met face to face. They clasped each other's hands with warmth, and William Tyndale said,—

"What hath brought you here—ill tidings from any I hold in loving remembrance?"

"I came," John Huchyns said, "to hear from you much that many who love you in England long to know, and to tell you much that cannot so easily be committed to paper. I sailed from London, and I have had a long voyage. I am somewhat tired and fasting, and I would gladly rest."

Master Pointz now appeared, and seemed on friendly terms with William Tyndale.

"This is my day of pastime," he said, "which brought me hither to beg a flask of wine for a poor soul who is sick, and now I beg board and lodgment for my kinsman, John Huchyns-Tyndale."

"Thy day of pastime is a day of toil in most folks' eyes," was the rejoinder. "Welcome to thy kinsman, and I will order the wine. It is a new thing when a man calleth it pastime to burrow amidst the lowest haunts of Antwerp to tend the sick in body and soul. The supper-hour is five of the clock," Pointz said, turning to John Huchyns. "Will it please you to rest till then, or take a cake with salads of cress and leeks to stay thy stomach till the heavier meal?"

John Huchyns agreed to this, and while he sat down to discuss it in the *salle*, or hall, William Tyndale stood by, asking again:—

"Are all well in your own county of Gloucestershire?"

"I left them so," was the answer. "I have tarried in London since the day after May-day, and one we both hold in affection is in sore trouble. The day that the Books were burned at St. Paul's Cross was a sore day of grief for Mistress Gilford. Her only boy, her little Amyas, was taken by his father to see the burning, their house being 'suspect,' and searched by priests for their Bible, which was carried off and consumed with the rest. It seems Hubert Gilford thought by this means to divert suspicion of heresy from his house: hence he urged the mother to go: and she refusing, he led the child thither. He perched him aloft on the coping of the wall running to the east of the Square, and then left him for a short space. The smoke and pother bewildered the boy, and in turning to avoid them, he fell some eight feet. He caught his head a blow which caused his death at midnight, and his mother is in the very deepest of griefs."

"Alas, Karina! I fear me her path has been a troubled one. Would she had given heed to me, ere she committed herself to that wild boy Hubert's keeping!"

"Would to God she had been spared the sorrows which have befallen her!" John Huchyns said, with a deep sigh. "She bade me come hither to find out whether it were possible for her and her child to take refuge in Antwerp, where, as I hear, many of the suspected ones in England have fled for safety. Her husband is now about the Court continually, and although at this time beside himself with grief, and vehement in all protestations of love and affection, he is but a broken reed to trust."

"Hath he pierced her as she leaned on him?" William Tyndale asked.

"I know nothing," was the reply, in a sad, low voice, "but I fear much."

"I will go forth on my mission, and return for the

supper: after which we will take a stroll by yon peaceful river, and I will hear further of you."

"Yes and let me know how it standeth with you," was the rejoinder.

In the quarter of Antwerp where William Tyndale now turned he was well known. It was a labyrinth of narrow lanes, with tall houses rising up on either side, from the windows of which hands might easily meet across from the upper storeys, which jutted out some feet beyond the line of the lower storeys, and were supported in some cases by thin wooden pillars, and in others by a kind of flying buttress here and there, which formed an arch over the street below.

The English who inhabited this quarter were very poor, and had hard work to eke out a livelihood. Persecutions, open and secret, had in most cases driven them from their country, and William Tyndale's presence in Antwerp had been an incentive to follow him. It was indeed true, as Pointz had said, that he gave up the last day of the working week—Saturday—and the first day—Monday—to go about on his errands of mercy.

The children ran out in this remote quarter to pluck at his gown and crave his blessing. The sick on their low pallets watched and waited for his coming, and he would give them all the temporal help that lay in his power, while he preached with more and more boldness the Gospel of God's free love.

The news of the burning of the Bibles had reached him before John Huchyns's arrival. He was busily engaged in sending forth a larger supply: for, strange to say, there was no legislation to prevent the hated Books from being imported to the shores of England, though sharp and diligent search was made for them when they had reached England.

He lodged at this time himself in the near neighbourhood of his countrymen, and although perfectly unsuspecting, he was even now narrowly watched, and reported from time to time to those who were determined to work his ruin. John Huchyns's news of Karina Gilford had filled him with sorrow, and, musing upon it, he entered the lowest floor of one of the tall houses, where a man lay dying of fever. There were often cases, here and there, of this fever; but the unusually early summer heat had spread it in these close quarters, and many people were afraid to enter them for fear of infection. Of this fear William Tyndale knew nothing, and he very often performed the last offices for those who were deserted and alone in a foreign land.

When he reached the sick man's cellar, for it was nothing better, he found a woman there who had come to keep guard out of charity. He poured out some of the wine he had brought and administered it to the invalid, giving the woman a few small pieces of money to go out and buy some food for herself.

When she was gone, he knelt by the low pallet, and breathed out a prayer, slowly and distinctly, in those ears dulled by the lassitude of exhaustion, and repeated comfortable words from the Gospel of Saint Matthew.

"Come unto Me, saith the blessed Jesus. Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are laden, and I will ease you."

"He giveth ease and peace to His beloved."

The smile of recognition and assent that followed this word was beautiful to see. As with Brother Edwyn in the Abbot's palace at Prinknash, so in the dark, gloomy cellar at Antwerp—the entrance of that Word from the mouth of His servant gave light.

From house to house he went, comforting, exhorting,

and instructing, till the time for meeting John Huchyns was come.

There is nothing more beautiful in the life of this man, who is as the central figure in the picture of those times which I have tried to draw, than the lovely harmony here presented between the teaching and the practice of the scholar and martyr. It is hardly possible for any one to think of the days he himself named "his days of pastime," without a thrill of sympathy and admiration.

Who shall count the numbers who in those days were as "treasures" which he was laying up in heaven? Who shall say how bright will be the shining of those jewels in the Redeemer's kingdom, gathered from the poor and suffering exiles from home and from country, by the hand which brought to them the Gospel of God's grace in words which were as water to a thirsty soul?

A meadow near Antwerp, through which a crystal stream ran towards the river, is memorable as the place where Sir Stephen Vaughan, the agent of Henry VIII. in the Netherlands, called on William Tyndale to vindicate his loyalty to his master by returning to England.

John Frith, the gentle scholar, firm in the faith, whose name appeared on the roll of those whom Wolsey had summoned to his new College of Christ Church at Oxford, for the building up of the learning of the new foundation, was Tyndale's companion and dear friend in the Netherlands, but he yielded to Vaughan's representations and returned to his native land to suffer and to die, while Tyndale resisted all the baits held out to him to go back to London.

When, for reasons of his own, Henry broke with Rome, and in many ways was allowed to take measures which were subservient to the cause of Church reform, he yet was an inveterate enemy to the use of Tyndale's Version,

and published a proclamation against it. William Tyndale had condemned the divorce, and that was enough. To cross the selfish nature of Henry VIII. was a sure road to ruin for priest or layman. At one time it was indeed rumoured that he had become favourably disposed towards the circulation of the English Bible; but that was soon after his marriage, and perhaps in the first enthusiasm of self-congratulation that he had attained his object he was ready to do everything to please Anne Boleyn, for it is said that she looked favourably on the New Testament being rendered in English.

It was in this meadow, where Sir Stephen Vaughan had done his best to tempt William Tyndale to return to England, that the two kinsmen walked together on this lovely summer evening.

The Cathedral rose up against the sky in proud majesty, and in the broad river lay the reflection of the spires and the tall handsome buildings which clustered below it. It was a peaceful scene, and the two men gave themselves up to its influence, speaking in low tones, as if unwilling to break the charm of silence.

"These tidings of my poor child, Karina," William Tyndale said, "fill me with sorrow: but it may be that God has yet much for her to do for Him. I feel differently concerning her and Joan. *She* is well at rest—her meek spirit could ill have brooked the tumult of the times. But though her heart is pierced with grief, and the loss of this dear boy must all but crush her, yet there is in Karina a strength and a will which God may raise up after this storm to do Him service. It is now," he continued, "seven years since I was forced to take refuge here. I have had tribulations which may have helped, as the word in our tongue implies, to thresh out the grain from the chaff which is stored up in men's hearts, and

needs to be winnowed. The bitterest of all disappointments was when the Bishop of London turned his back on me, and would have left me to starve, had not good Master Monmouth received me in his house. All things have worked towards the completion of my work, and," he added, "all things shall work for its success. In Hamburg I found help and friends—then what honour, what joy, to be face to face with Martin Luther at Wittenberg. Verily, it was grand to listen to the great wisdom with which he spake; and if sometimes with stormy energy and heat, there is enough now to stir the forces of deeps such as lie hidden in him. He hath used a sharp knife, and hewed with a strong hand, but no gentler one would have sufficed. The tree must needs be purged, if it is to bring forth fruit for the healing of the nation. You have heard of my work in that peaceful Wittenberg with good John Frith, whose learning has helped me much: and I owe much to one William Ray for his clear writing of the copy for the printers. My latest trial was the suffering of shipwreck last year, and the loss of books and papers, and especially of the translations of the books of the Old Testament. But see how out of these stormy waters deliverance came. I was thrown once more to Hamburg, where the godliest and noblest of women, Mistress Margaret van Emmersen, helped and consoled me. The arrow that flieth by night, and the pestilence walking at noon-day, did not touch us who sat long and wearyful hours at repairing of the loss we had sustained. Thousands were departing by reason of the sweating sickness, but we suffered not. And then, as now, I took my pastime and rest by going forth amongst the sick and dying, and pointing them to the Cross. Much more could I say of my sojourn at Cologne, and of my return hither, but it is not needful now. Enough for thee, my good kinsman,

to bear back to Mistress Karina Gilford my benediction and my encouragement to her to hold on to the end."

"And will you not come to England? Is there no hope?"

"Nay; I would not put my head in the jaws of the lion," was the reply. "I have much yet to do before I can say that I have finished my work. I have diligently taken heed to the adverse notices of my translation. Verily, John Huchyns, a Greek scholar needeth to sharpen his wits by constant study. I do make continually a new correction here and there, as I read and compare and pray for light. For think not I do not call constantly for the guiding of the Spirit. 'Open my eyes to see Thy real meaning, Lord!' I say, and then I go back to a hard and tangled text with renewed zeal. But tell me, as far as may be, the real condition of my old pupil Karina. Dost thou think her husband has verily deserted her?"

"On that question I dare not speak," John Huchyns said. "He is, or was when I left them, prostrate with grief. He loved his boy—he was proud of him; and forsooth, though I only gazed on him when death had shadowed his fair face, he was exceeding lovely. Ah! well!" he exclaimed, "there could be few sights that would pain the beholder more than that grief-struck mother holding out her arms for the dying child. And now her sorrow is all but mute—there is no crying aloud, no passion of grief, no reproaches heaped on him who well merits them. For he took the child into peril, and left him, so the bystanders say, to go and jest as to the burning with some pranked-out women about Anne Boleyn's person. Yea, left him in peril, and with the smoke and pother choking him by the veering round of the wind. Well, Karina made no moan or outbreak of anger, after the first words, which will ring in my ears

till I die: 'You have killed him! you have killed him!' The boy was uncommon quick in his parts. He had learned much from your Book, and she, his stricken mother, bid me tell you that his last words, whispered brokenly with a smile, were: 'Mother, blessed are the mayentainers of peace.'"

"Dear boy! And she hath another child: and Elfrida Bragge serves her well?"

"Yea, verily; and her little daughter Giulia is an image of herself as to colour of hair and eyes, but all sparkle and merriment. The boy took after his mother in grave earnestness."

"And yet Karina could sing and laugh merrily. I mind well how she was the sunshine of our study at the Manor. I can see her now before me," William Tyndale said, "singing like a bird to greet the dawn, with a basket of the golden daffodils carried on her head. Ah, me! I can scarce bear to think on her, as you bring her before me, sore stricken and sad."

After a pause he said,—

"You have taken to your heart no wife, John?"

"Nay, I shall never wed any woman," was the reply. "My sister keeps my household in fine order, and is so good at the rearing of cattle, that our monies come in freely, and we prosper well. Nay, Will, I shall never wed."

William Tyndale understood his kinsman's meaning, and questioned him no further.

John Huchyns stayed in Antwerp, at the house of Thomas Pointz, for a week, and then returned to London. He had seen much of interest in Antwerp, and the foreign life was fresh to one who had been brought up amongst the Cotswold Hills, to whom Gloucester or Bristol were as a metropolis, and whose visits to London had been few and far between. On the night before his departure,

William Tyndale committed to him a thick parcel well packed, containing, as he said, a woollen shawl of Antwerp looms, and a jewel within, for Mistress Karina Gilford.

It needed no great discernment to divine what that jewel was; but John Huchyns asked no questions, and sailed in a vessel the captain of which was known to be friendly to the doctrines of Luther.

Thomas Pointz refused to take any payment from a kinsman of William Tyndale, and from first to last was the true and faithful friend of the man who under his roof found an asylum during the last year of his liberty, and had been a welcome guest there for many years previously.

"I commend you to the holy keeping of God, John Huchyns," were William Tyndale's last words, as the two men parted on the quay at Antwerp, to meet no more in this world.

CHAPTER XXII.

MEETINGS OF OLD FRIENDS.

THE burning of the Bibles at St. Paul's Cross was followed by other fires, and the piles of fagots at Smithfield were lighted to consume those who dared openly to confess their faith.

John Frith, to whom William Tyndale wrote many words of comfort and encouragement while in the Tower, was one of those who perished.

But as with the Bibles, so with the people who loved them, and claimed to have them read in a tongue which was familiar—the fire seemed to be the fruitful means of increasing the numbers of both. Everywhere the new faith—or rather the new light shed on the old faith—

strengthened; and while the King was cruelly divorcing one wife and marrying another—while Wolsey was dying a broken-hearted man, and the great and the noble of the realm were more or less in terror of the fitful moods of Henry—while Pope and Emperor were alike puzzled to find out his real intentions or his real mind for many months together—one thing was stable, affected neither by royal whims nor royal cruelty, shaken by no fierce criticism nor fiery invective. The Word of God, printed now year by year by thousands instead of hundreds, was firmly and steadily taking its place in this country, whence it was never really to be dislodged again.

Steadfast and unflinching was William Tyndale in the continual revision and study of the Hebrew text for the Old, and the Greek for the New Testament, and he must have felt that he was making way with his great work, and that the labour of his life was not in vain.

There was no doubt in any man's mind who thought of the subject at all, that the Bible and the principles which it taught was becoming a standard of life and practice, and that the blessed hope of immortality through the death and rising again of the Lord Jesus, free and unshackled by the fetters which had been thrown around it, was to be known as *a gift* henceforth without money and without price.

The years that went on after the death of little Amyas were sad years to Karina. When the first bitterness of grief and remorse was past, Hubert threw himself again into the full swing of the Court gaiety.

Sir Harry Gilford had retired very much from the onerous part of his duties, and Hubert was suffered to step into them. Not, indeed, that he did so in his own person, but he was nominally consulted, and his paid servants under him did the work.

So the years went on, and Karina and her faithful Elfrida led a quiet, isolated life in the upper chambers of the house overlooking the river, brightened by the presence of little Giulia, who grew in beauty and fascination every day. She delighted to perch in the deep window-seat, and to be allowed with a hushed reverence to turn over the pages of the Bible which John Huchyns had brought over from Antwerp in the parcel made of a woollen shawl, and to talk of her brother Amyas, whom Elfrida told her had gone straight up the golden pathway of light to the Paradise of God.

Elfrida had her Bible too, sent in the same parcel, and as yet both mistress and maid had been left in peace. No inquiries had been made, and the very existence of Hubert Gilford's wife and child was almost forgotten.

Good Humphrey Monmouth sometimes mounted those stairs, and loved to have converse with Karina; but she had few visitors. More than once Cicely Lee, now a full blown Lancaster Rose, came to see her, and talked much of her happiness at Yate Manor, and the goodness of her husband, Sir Richard Lee.

"It is better, methinks, to be the darling of an old man than deserted by a young one," Cicely, with her old bluntness had blurted out. But she had quickly turned off the joke, which she saw pained Karina, by adding,—

"I have lacked one thing thou hast, Karina—I have no dear child. I would I had a fairy like yours to dress with all smart things, and carry with me."

Sir John and Dame Marjory kept away from London. Quiet country gentlemen like Sir John Walsh cared not to leave their homesteads for the gay and tumultuous city. But they sent Karina many kindly greetings by Cicely, and so would Giles if he dared.

"Big, lumping Giles—he is just as stupid as of yore,

but good as gold. Hal we know nought of. He was ever a wild scapegrace as a boy, thou well knowest. Mother looks wondrous young," Cicely continued. "She doth trip with a lighter step than mine."

Karina smiled, and thought that might easily be the case, as she recalled the heavy tread which made the old oaken balustrade creak when my Lady Lee, as she loved to be called, came up behind Elfrida.

"Then there is Tebita Collet standing still—a wrinkled brown face cannot show age. I stand a chance of getting an old crone before Tebita. Sir Richard always calls me his Damask Rose or his Rose of Lancaster. Katherine Huchyns I see no oftener than I see thee, Karina. She is so given over to cows and pigs and the making of butter: and those things lie not in my path at Yate Manor," Cicely said, with a certain assumption of dignity befitting my Lady Lee. "I have learned to play on the lute, and my silken embroidery would amaze thee. Thou wilt come and visit the old places again, Karina? Why will not Hubert bring thee?"

"He hath so much to engage him about the Court," she said gravely.

"And thou mightest be a grand Court lady, an it pleased thee. I marvel at thy taste, dwelling alone at the top of this high house. Nevertheless, it is a fine view of the river, and the grand barges and the fine folk passing to and fro. I'd as lieve gaze out on them as on our own deer-park," said Cicely honestly. "I do love a brave show, and Sir Richard brings me to London to please me."

So she rattled on; but like a Parthian arrow shot over the shoulder at departing were her last words:—

"It is strange that Master John Huchyns comes not

anear thee—he was thy leal and true friend in days past. Farewell, Karina.”

“The Cicely of old, verily,” said Karina, when her guest was gone. “Happy! yes, she is happy in her own way. But, ah! me, that is but an empty life that knoweth not the true happiness; and, have I but patience to endure, methinks I am happier than Cicely. For I know that beyond time and all these shadows there is the Rest that remaineth. But the sight of Cicely bringeth back my old visions—all I would do, all I would be, here, in this world, forsooth. Here! and I have done nothing but learn to endure. What are those blessed words ‘To him that overcometh will I give to eat off the tree of lyfe, which is in the myddest off the Paradise of God,’—whither my boy is gone. Yes, I need not to pay for masses for his soul, as his kind old grandfather doth out of ignorance and love. Nay, Amyas, my child, thou art in the Paradise of God, waiting for thy mother—‘sweet mother,’ as thou didst love to call me.”

A spasm of grief swept over Karina, and tears were raining on the tapestry she had been working at when Cicely came in, when Elfrida and little Giulia returned from their daily airing in the gardens. Giulia sprang to her mother, and hugged and kissed her.

“Mother, I have seen father, and he is coming this evening to see thee. Ah! mother, do not cry!”

Then she whispered,—

“Thou hast little Giu left to thee; and brother Amyas is so happy, Elfrida says—only gone up the golden pathway of light. Nay, mother, do not weep. I have been to the Old Folk’s Hospital with Elfrida, and Old Gammer Hale was in great joy with the warm garment thou didst send her. She told me I was as fair as an angel, and my eyes were like stars, and—oh! I can’t tell thee

more"—for Elfrida, who was standing near, did not smile but looked gravely at the little chatterer. "I don't care for soft speeches, not I! I know well I am not like Amyas, who is an angel; while I have tantrums, and I have troubled Elfrida to-day by leaving her hand when I caught a glint of father. Father was laughing and looked so grand and brave. I am glad he is coming to-night. Mother, it must be good for children whose fathers live in their homes, and not at Court—like Sir John Walsh did when thou wast a little girl at Sodbury."

When Elfrida could edge in a word she said,—

"Sir Hubert Gilford bid me say he would be here about evensong, and would take supper here. Must I order below that they prepare for this?"

"Yes, yes," Karina said hastily; "see that there is a stuffed capon and stewed lampreys, and mind that the conserve of quinces be served—thy master loveth them. Will he bring any friend with him?"

"I know not, Madame; my master seemed in haste, and scarce did more than give his orders."

"It will be well to be prepared. Do thou give orders below; and now, Giulia, come to thy tasks, for thou hast to pick out every stitch of thy needlework that thou didst in haste yesterday."

Giulia pouted.

"I do hate needlework, and I love books. I would sooner be in prison than stitch with those hateful silks, or make ugly garments for old gammers," and Giulia shrugged her little shoulders in a very determined way.

Karina sighed.

"Be not so wayward and naughty, Giulia," she said. "It makes me fear thou wilt have some sharp tasks to learn."

"It is sharp when the needle-point pricks my finger

till the blood runneth," the child rejoined, her dark eyes flashing with mischievous light, pleased with her retort.

"Hearken, Giulia, thou must not speak thus to thy mother—it is not seemly. Take the stool, and unpick thy false stitches, and replace them with true ones, side by side, thus. Thou shalt not open thy book till this is done."

Giulia, after the fashion of naughty little girls in all times, twitched and pulled at the stitches, which it had been easier to put in badly than to take out quickly, and she was thus employed when her father came in. He looked hot and flurried, and said,—

"Quick, give me the Testaments, Elfrida's and thine—quick!"

Karina started up.

"Do not take them, I beseech you, Hubert. I cannot, cannot part with mine."

"I want to hide them below in a secret cupboard. Be not a fool, Karina—much is at stake, I warrant me, and thou mayst find thyself lodged in a prison cell if thou art so contumacious. Thy friend old Monmouth is safe locked and barred therein. They are out with warrants. They will be here anon: for it is whispered—aye, more than whispered—that we are a pack of heretics here; and it will be a thousand times worse for thee now than four years ago. See, quick, Karina—obey me!"

Then Giulia threw down her hated task, and, rushing to her father, said,—

"Oh! father, take not away mother's beloved Book—the Book Amyas, my brother, loved. Take it not, dear father!"

"They will be here to seize it, child, if I hide it not. They will seize, perhaps, not only the Book, but thy mother, and shut her up in prison. They have no pity,"

he said bitterly; "they know no pity—and—" he broke off. "It is too late," he said. "Wilful woman that you are, your danger must lie on your own head."

An altercation was now heard on the stairs, and the porter's voice calling his master. There was no numerous retinue of attendants kept in those days. A porter and two other servants, a man and his wife, lived in the basement storey of Gilford House.

Karina could not help admiring her husband's composure, as he walked to the head of the stairs, and called in a clear voice,—

"Who goes there?"

"We have a warrant here signed by the King's order to search this house for books containing damnable heresies, especially a Testament in the vernacular rendered by one William Tyndale."

Something in that voice smote on Karina's ear as familiar; and when the four priests, escorted by two soldiers, tramped into the room, she recognised in the foremost the Father Francis of former times.

A shudder passed over her, so vividly did his appearance bring back the sufferings of poor sensitive Joan. If she and her child fell into his hands, she well knew that the tender mercies of the wicked would be cruel.

Father Francis gave no sign of recognition either of Hubert Gilford or his wife. He kept his eyes well on the ground, and, with the old sanctimonious grimace, muttered some incantation, and ordered the search to be made.

The three priests, supported by the soldiers' presence, began at once to examine every part of the room and the one adjoining, and were very soon in possession of the two Bibles.

"Will it please you to burn those Books, good Father?" Karina asked.

No one replied, and Hubert gave his wife a warning look; but she went bravely on—

"Because, Father Francis—for I mind you well, though you have forgot me—because, forsooth, since the burning of my first Book, for years ago, I have had time to learn much more of the Gospels by heart. They are writ there, and you can scarce burn them out thence."

One rapid, swift glance from Father Francis, as he raised the heavy lids which from much drooping perhaps were slow to lift,—one rapid, sinister glance, and a murmured word which Elfrida, standing nearest, heard and understood to be, "*Perchance yes.*" Then with a solemn exhortation to abjure heresy, and to return to the good paths of the Church, lest she had to apply the rod to her erring children, the Books were carried off, with several suspicious tracts, and the room was relieved of the presence of the spies.

Giulia had crept close to her father, and now said under her breath,—

"What fearsome men, father; they were so wicked to steal our Bibles."

"Hist! child, it is not safe to speak like that. But I would speak alone to thy mother—run now to Elfrida till they serve supper."

Hubert Gilford had much to say, and not much time to say it in. There was no doubt that Father Francis—whether to work, perhaps, some old grudge in the matter of Joan Walsh, who had been lost to the Church, and the wealth with which Lady Cranstone would have endowed her, with her, or for some deep hidden reason down in that mine where lies the hurtful doctrine that "*the end justifies the means,*"—whether either or both

these motives were present—certain it was that Father Francis had set the “blood-hounds on the scent,” and that with the Books in his hand, both with the name of William Tyndale on the fly-leaf, he possessed a handle against Mistress Karina Gilford which he would not be slow to use.

John Frith had been burned at the stake, refusing to draw back in his protest against existing errors.

“And if I know thee, Karina,” her husband said, “thou wilt never recant, or profess one thing believing another.”

“Thou dost read me aright,” was her reply, putting her hand in his with something of the old tenderness. “I am glad thou readest me aright. I would not bring thee into trouble at Court, and methought scarce any knew of my existence. Except the dear late Queen, few in high places need me. Let me flee somewhere for safety.”

“This was the thought in my own heart,” Hubert replied. “There is a ship sailing from London to-night, bound for Antwerp. What sayest thou—shall I take thee and Elfrida and our child thither, to abide till these storms anent the Scriptures have calmed down? That arch-hypocrite Father Francis will hardly be prepared for so swift a move. He would have to burrow in the dark for some time before he could really arraign thee. Think of the agony of soul to me—think of the gibes of the Court minions, now only too ready to level shafts at me. Thy ministrations, my wife, to the old and poor are known—thy friendship with old Humphrey Monmouth. I do not say many know of this, or note it; but if yon ferret begin his work, there are eyes that have seen, and tongues that will tell what they have seen.”

“I am not afraid of any such. I would not shrink

greatly from prison, wherein I should follow many holy and sainted ones; but there is our child, our only one on earth—for we hold another treasure where the thief cannot break in. I will flee, Hubert, to this strange land, if thou wilt help me—and it is for thy good.”

“Thou wert always brave and good,” he said honestly. “Would I had been worthier of thee, and of that saint of ours, whose death will lay heavy on his poor father’s heart for evermore. Kiss me once, as in happier days, dear wife.”

She raised her face to his with a sad, sweet smile, and did as he asked. Then she said brightly,—

“I will go and summon Elfrida to prepare for our journey. Ah! me. I trust little Giulia will not be terrified at the sea.”

“Nay, she will sleep at starting. We must take the barge as far as Gravesend and there find the ship. I have already spoken with the skipper on the Tower wharf. We will start an hour after sunset, at seven o’ the clock, under favour of the darkness. The King is at Hampton Palace, and if it is known that I am departing, it will excite no comment.”

“What wilt thou say to the porter and the other servants?”

“Leave that to me,” was the reply. “I doubt not I shall satisfy them.”

The evening was chill and cold when Karina and little Giulia stood ready at the stairway to step into the barge that was waiting.

For some time now Karina had dispensed with her waiting-woman, and Elfrida managed all packing and necessary preparations for her mistress.

Hubert was kind and attentive, sheltering Karina with cloaks and furs from the breeze, which was strong enough

to ruffle the river into waves which broke with sharp, continuous splashes against the prow of the barge.

Little Giulia lay quite contentedly in her father's arms, and the song of the watermen, taken up and echoed by many boats which they passed, lulled her to sleep. Giulia knew nothing of the change from the barge to the vessel, a small merchantman bound for the harbour of Antwerp, whose captain was not unknown to Hubert Gilford.

As the wind was contrary, the voyage was prolonged, but Karina was not impatient. There was a sense of protection given by her husband, and a shadow of his lost love for her seemed to return. She almost wished she could go on sailing over that blue sea for weeks instead of days, where no strife or bitterness could reach her, and where with husband and child she was content.

Poor Elfrida was terribly sea-sick, and thus Giulia fell much to her parents' care. The child was delighted to watch the white-crested waves, as the small ship curtsyed upon them, and snowy gulls flew overhead with their shrill, melancholy cry.

"Wilt thou remain long with us in Antwerp?" she asked.

"I fear me not long. My absence from Court will be missed, and even my poor old father does not know of it. It was for thy safety I came, and when I have found a place of abode for thee near William Tyndale, thou wilt be content. I will return for thee and the child when suspicion is laid to rest. Other heretics will claim notice, other matters will press: and then methinks I will return for thee, Karina, and I will give up office at the Court, and we will see something of foreign countries, and then go and settle down somewhere near Sodbury with our Giulia. What sayest thou?"

"It would please me well to be with thee and our child," Karina said. But if her thoughts had gained full utterance, she would have added, "Thy mood changes so swiftly and so often that I dare not build thereon."

"I am tired of life oftentimes," Hubert continued. "I have never felt the same man since that dread day when the fires were lighted at St. Paul's Cross. God knoweth there have been many lighted since, but none that have wrought such bitter woe to me."

Karina never knew how to meet these remorseful retrospects in which her husband would sometimes indulge—as too many who have brought sorrow upon themselves and others are wont to indulge: in the spirit which puts confession and self-condemnation in the place of true repentance.

"Let us live," she said gently, "so that we may hope to meet our boy in heaven. Let us be diligent in taking to heart the words of the Lord Jesus. For, dear husband, it is not the hearers of that Word, but the doers, in whom He delights."

He did not complain of her preachments now—he put his arm round her and pressed her close.

"Pray for me, dear wife," he said, "and judge me not."

The autumn sunshine lay upon the towers and roofs of Antwerp when the ship was moored at the quay. Little Giulia was all astir now, and charmed with the new scenes. The strange language chattered around her, and the variety of costume, delighted her.

The beauty of both mother and child attracted many eyes, and on Hubert asking the way to the house of one Master Thomas Pointz, an English merchant, several who could speak that language started forward to act as guides.

Thomas Pointz had known Amyas Gilford well, and welcomed the travellers with heartiness and warmth.

"This very day se'nnight," he said, "I prepared a room for one whose name you well know—William Tyndale. He has for some time persisted in dwelling in the lower parts of the city, to be near to succour those of his countrymen who needed him. But I saw him getting leaner and more aged every day: so I have, by force of persuasion and entreaty upon entreaty, brought him hither. You know his name?"

"Aye, verily, we know it, and hold it in high esteem," said Karina.

"Not higher than he merits, good Mistress Gilford," said Thomas Pointz. "If ever a man walked near to God, that man is William Tyndale. But now to your room:" and Thomas Pointz himself led the way up the wide stairs, and established them in rooms, at the top of the house it is true, but so spotlessly clean that they were inviting and home-like.

It was no wonder Erasmus, who had been brought up with eyes accustomed to the purity of Dutch houses, should attribute the dire scourge of the sweating sickness, which raged in the city of London and other places five times between 1483 and 1551, to the fact "that the floors of the houses are in general laid with white clay and are covered with rushes, occasionally removed, but so imperfectly that the bottom layer is left undisturbed, sometimes for twenty years! harbouring expectorations, ale drippings, scraps of fish, and the like abominations. Whenever the weather changes," Erasmus goes on to say, "a vapour is exhaled which I consider very detrimental to health."

Detrimental indeed!—but in the upper chambers where Karina and her child and maid found an asylum

in the house of good Thomas Pointz, there were clean scrubbed boards, and bureaus and buffets where not a speck of dust could be detected. Space and air and light compensated for the fair prospect of the Thames and its gay traffic: for the windows of Karina Gilford's room looked only on the windows of the opposite side of the house, which was built round the square. At one of these sat a figure bending over a table covered with books—a familiar figure to Karina, and not for one moment did she doubt whose it was.

“See, Elfrida! see, Giulia! look across to yon window.”

“There is nought to see, mother,” the child exclaimed. “I see nought but some dear white pigeons on the roof.”

Elfrida, however, looked out, following the direction of her mistress's eyes.

“Aye, madame, aye, verily, it is the form of our dear Father William Tyndale.”

“He sees us not, Elfrida—yes, there he is looking across. Greet him, Giulia, greet yon noble Father, for it is he who gave thy mother the blessed Book from which thou hast learned the words of life.”

Giulia did as she was bid, and William Tyndale, who had merely raised his head abstractedly, and was determining some nice distinction of a Greek particle, slowly awoke to the certainty that the figures on the opposite side of the quadrangle were not those of strangers. He rose, and looking earnestly for a moment, waved his hand in answer to the greeting of the child, while his own bright smile shone on his face.

“Mistress Karina Gilford!” he exclaimed: and then he disappeared, anxious to meet those whom he had thought never to see again in this world. A happy meeting it was—to be followed by a parting how bitter! But let the happiness suffice for another year.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ANTWERP.

KARINA GILFORD and her little daughter were speedily made to feel at home in Master Thomas Pointz's house in Antwerp; and Mistress Pointz, who had been away in England, returned soon after the arrival of the new guests, and joined with her husband in giving them welcome. She was an excellent person of sound sense and discretion, and William Tyndale used to call her "Master Thomas Pointz's ruby set in gold." For she had an ample fortune from her father, a draper who had carried on an extensive business in London: and indeed her mission in England had been to set her name to some documents and papers which made over to her a part in the profits of the concern, of which her brothers had the lion's share.

The good work Mistress Pointz carried on in Antwerp amongst the exiles from home and country was a noble one. She shared William Tyndale's "days of pastime," and her purse was ever open to succour those in distress. Her heart went out at once to the dark-eyed mother and lovely child whom she found in the upper chamber of her spacious house.

Karina seemed to spring out into more brightness and activity under Mistress Pointz's influence than at any time since her boy's death. She would accompany her in her visits to the poor, set herself to learn the art of cooking dishes which were economical and nutritious; and with these occupations, and teaching her little Giulia, the days passed peacefully and happily.

William Tyndale was at this time most deeply engaged in his task of revision, but he would find an hour, in the

long winter evenings of 1534-5, to sit by the huge pine-wood fire kindled in Thomas Pointz's hall, and there talk with all his wonted brilliancy on many topics which were then stirring in men's minds.

It seemed probable about this time that the rupture between the Emperor Charles V. and Henry VIII. on the subject of the divorce would become serious and end in war. Indeed, the horizon, political and religious, was dark with ominous clouds, and all things seemed standing on the brink of some great revolutionary storm. Amidst all the wranglings of kings and emperors, prelates and nobles—amidst all the confusion of tongues and bitterness of controversy, it is beautiful and comforting to mark how the still small voice of God was making itself heard, and how the undying work of one who stood now on the very brink of martyrdom was slowly and surely making its way.

These last months of Tyndale's life were harassed by the liberties which a man named Joye had taken with the text of his Bible; for though ever ready to avail himself of hostile or friendly criticism, he protested against the surreptitious edition which was circulated by Joye three months before his own authorized revision was published. But however keenly William Tyndale had felt this act of Joye's, he had great compensation in the entire confidence and faith which his countrymen in Antwerp reposed in him. So trusting was his nature, so childlike his simplicity, that he fell an easy prey to the traitorous designs of one who was, it is believed, sent from England to lay a trap for the translator of the Bible. While he lived there could be no real hope of stamping out his work. Year by year fresh editions, carefully revised, were sent over to England in the language which many could read and all could understand. If this con-

tinued, the hold of the Church, as represented by unscrupulous prelates and priests, would be weakened.

“Dry up the spring,” they said, “and the stream will cease to flow. Root up the tree from the soil, and the branches will wither.” But those who compassed William Tyndale’s destruction did not recognise the great truth that the spring whence the water of life flowed, lay deep in the city of God, and that the root of the tree was firmly fixed where mortal hands could not reach it—in Paradise, above the storms and tempests of earth.

It was once more May-time, and Antwerp, like other towns, was in its festal dress. It was the month of flowers and song—the month which was called the month of Mary in the Roman Church, and especially full of fêtes and religious processions and offerings at her shrines in her honour.

From all these things, those who had been taught to look beyond the superstitions which had grown up since the early ages of the Church were more and more disposed to turn away. Those who could hear and read the Gospel of God’s grace found therein no exaltation of one whose matchless song, sung daily in our Church, remains for ever a witness that *she* dreamed not of any such setting up of the Mother for homage due only to the Son. “All generations shall call me blessed.” Yes, but benediction is not exaltation.

Thomas Pointz’s house was a meeting-place for many of the English engaged in commerce, and all those who had taken up their abode at Antwerp, like Karina Gilford, to escape the stigma which fastened on them in their own country as possessors of the Bible, and converts to the doctrines it taught. It was the custom after the sup-

per for those who were actually boarding in the house, and those who visited them on friendly terms, to meet together in the outer hall, which opened from the *salle* or dining-hall. Here Mistress Pointz would bring her distaff, and sit with Karina Gilford, Elfrida, and little Giulia, in a deep recessed window looking out on the quadrangle. This was reached at the side by a long, narrow passage from the street, and many came in and went out that way. The wider opening towards the market-place was chiefly entered by packhorses and travellers on their first arrival.

"The good Father William Tyndale is late this evening," Mistress Pointz remarked. "He hath had no supper, and had no dinner—he is too scant in his food. When forth on his errands of mercy, or sitting in his chamber, he forgets he hath a stomach to feed, or a body dependent thereon."

"He went out early to-day," Giulia said. "I saw him from our window conversing in the yard with a very handsome gentleman, dressed in black velvet, with a gold chain on his neck. As handsome as father," she added, turning to Karina with a sigh. "I wish it had been father. I crave to see him—when will he come, mother?"

Karina looked up from her needlework, and said,—

"His last letter spoke of a summer day, and he would be with us."

"A summer day! Methinks this is a summer day, and he is not here! Mother, may I walk out with Elfrida for a short space on the broad roadway outside?"

"Hast thou learned thy task, Giulia?" her mother asked.

"Yes, and I have done the bit of needlework also. Prythee, sweet mother, grant me leave to go forth with Elfrida."

"Till the great clock striketh six," her mother said. "Watch the time, Elfrida."

The child skipped away, glad to exchange the restraint of the hall for the street: and, holding Elfrida's hand, she chattered about all she would do when she went back to England with her father.

"Dost thou never crave to see thy father, Elfrida, and the old church at Bristol?"

"Yes, verily, there are times when I crave to see Bristol; but, my father having another wife, the old home is changed."

"Tell me about Father Tyndale taking thee up to a high grey rock, and thy hanging one foot over the steep place. I can scarce fancy thee a little girl, Elfrida, so grave as thou art now—so young and yet so solemn, as father used to have it."

Elfrida smiled rather a sad smile.

"These are grave times, methinks. See, there is our dear Father with the smart gentleman again. How busily they are talking. They are returning together to Master Pointz's house. I have not seen the Father look so gay for many a day."

"Thou hast made a rhyme, Elfrida—that is for luck, so Master Pointz saith. Come hither, Elfrida, to yon booth—there are some strange clocks there. Hark! I hear a cock a-crowing. Prythee come, Elfrida:" and the child dragged Elfrida towards a booth set up in the Square, where a great variety of Nuremburg clocks were ticking and striking all hours at once, while a man was expatiating on the marvellous qualities of each.

Meantime William Tyndale and his companion had entered the hall of Master Pointz's house, and Tyndale introduced his new acquaintance to those who were assembled.

"Master Henry Phillips hath come over from Poole," he saith, "and is pleased to converse with any on matters of interest concerning languages. I tell him he will meet many a worthy gentleman here who will be better instructed in modern tongues than I am. By your leave, Master Pointz, he would take dinner here at noon to-morrow."

Master Pointz consented with his usual kindness and hospitality: and filling some silver cups with thin Rhenish wine flavoured with herb, he invited the new-comer to draw near the end of the board, and introduced him to several of his brother merchants. The ladies, who were seated a little apart, were not unobserved by Phillips. He had the faculty of hearing with each ear, and had the power of carrying on a conversation while he was taking in all that passed apart from it. Karina Gilford's appearance struck him, but it was not his habit to make any direct inquiries. William Tyndale was, however, invited to speak of her, and he went away pretty well assured of her identity with the wife of one of the King's household, who had been obliged to flee from England under suspicion of heresy.

"Master Phillips is a clever man—something wise in his own conceit, but full of many things that he has picked up in his travels."

"What bringeth him here?" asked Master Pointz.

"Nay, I did not ask him—his business is not mine to pry into."

"I like not his looks," said Karina; "he hath a furtive glance which remindeth me of Father Francis. He is not a man I would put my faith in."

"Well spoken, Mistress Gilford! that is what I feel," exclaimed Pointz. "I would not put faith in him for a groat's worth of cloth."

"Aye, well, forsooth, you are mighty choice in y our likings," said Mistress Pointz. "I never saw a braver-looking gentleman. Didst not mark his hands?—they were long and slender, and there was on his little finger a brilliant that shone like a star."

Master Pointz laughed.

"Hand and jewel make not the man, good wife; something else goes thereto. William Tyndale is welcome to bring him to our board, nevertheless. There's some fresh news from England, Father. The persecution is getting hot and hotter."

"Nay is it so? Master Phillips led me to believe things are smoothing down, and that soon the Bible will be ordered to be read in the churches."

"He lies then," was the short answer. "If he has lately come from England, he must needs know of the cruel burning of the poor peasant man in Essex, who has been hurried to prison and the stake; and all because while the great folks were at mass in his parish, he lifted the boards of his poor cottage, where he kept hid the English Books of Holy Scripture, and read therein. Master Phillips must have heard of this, for friends and foes alike speak of the cruel burning of this old man, with tears."

"Is it indeed so!" William Tyndale exclaimed: and then, as often, his face assumed a mournful sadness, and he turned slowly away.

"How long, O Lord, how long?" he murmured. "Wilt thou not defend the cause of the poor: for the sorrowful sighing of the needy, preserve Thou them that are appointed to die."

For two days Master Henry Phillips was a constant guest at Master Pointz's house. He was very pleasant, and talked on every subject with ease, and professed the

greatest admiration for little Giulia. The child responded, and told him many things about her father, of whom she said, Phillips reminded her; of the fine things he sometimes brought from Court for her; of the death of her little brother Amyas, whom she wished she could remember. Then about the circumstances of his death, and that mother's first Bible was burned at St. Paul's Cross the day little Amyas died. Then how two more precious books had been taken away—one was Elfrida's and one her mother's; but now they had others, and Father Tyndale told them that very soon every one would have one for their very own.

This and much more the child in her innocence chattered about, and it was with a pout and a frown that she heard Master Pointz say to her mother one day:—

“Take heed this little maiden be not too free with yon stranger. I feel a strange misgiving concerning him, and I could wish our dear Father Tyndale were not so much in converse with him.”

Karina took the hint, and Giulia, in spite of frowns and sulks, was taken off by Elfrida when Master Phillips came into the hall the next day. To Karina's surprise, he waved his hand to the child, saying,—

“Fare thee well, little Angela—for that sure is thy right name. I am departing to-day for a short space.”

No one knew where Master Phillips had gone, and to some his absence was a relief.

After a fortnight had passed, William Tyndale met his friend, and was crossing the street to greet him with all his accustomed warmth and kindness, but Master Phillips avoided him. William Tyndale, ever unsuspecting and trusting, thought nothing of this conduct, and on returning to Master Pointz's house, he was met by the news that he had been called away to Bruges on business.

"There are strangers about in this quarter," said an old merchant who dined daily at Master Pointz's table. "I have seen several strange faces lurking about the entry. I'd as lieve Master Pointz were at home."

"Strangers are not an uncommon sight," Mistress Pointz rejoined. "What aileth thee with these strangers?"

The good merchant could scarcely answer this question, but he murmured,—

"I like not their looks:" and that was all.

And now the time drew near when the plot hatched in England was to be brought to a successful issue at Antwerp. Two or three days passed, and William Tyndale, leaving Master Pointz's one morning, was accosted by Master Henry Phillips.

"Methought you had enow of my acquaintance," Tyndale said.

"Nay, but I have had a chronic rheum which has afflicted me sorely since my return to Antwerp, and to add to this a grievous misfortune hath befallen me. I have lost my leather purse and all it contains, and I have not withal to get a day's meal."

"If that be all," said Tyndale, "I can lend you coin enow to carry you through."

"I could not ask so great a favour," said Phillips; "but——"

"Thou shalt take what I have, and repay me at thy leisure. I am not over rich, for there are so many who are bound to share my purse with me—the sick and the poor for conscience sake who abide in this city of Antwerp, strangers and friendless. See, take what I have."

Master Henry Phillips made a feint of being unwilling to do so, but at last yielded to William Tyndale's wishes.

“Take it—thou art alone here, and I have friends. I am allowed to bid any to Master Pointz’s table free. Return this noon to dinner, and I will ensure thee a welcome.”

“How can I yield thee thanks that are thy due?” was the reply. “I will return for the noonday meal, and bring thee that treatise I spoke of on the verbs’ tenses in Flemish.”

He returned indeed, with the Procureur-General and his official, whom he stationed at the street entrance by the narrow passage to the quadrangle. William Tyndale, hastening his return from his works of mercy—for it was one of his days of pastime—in the low parts of the town, arrived before Thomas Pointz’s house in good time. Master Phillips met him, and was preceding him up the narrow entry, when the men set on guard, closed on him at a sign from Phillips, and he was seized and borne away, penniless and helpless, *en route* for Brussels. The officers did their work so quickly, that before any one within Master Pointz’s house could be aware, William Tyndale’s room was searched, and all his books and papers seized, with which in all haste they followed the prisoner. He was lodged in the Castle of Vilvorde, a village between Brussels and Malines, before Master Thomas Pointz returned that night to hear the tale from his wife and Karina Gilford.

And now not a moment was lost by Thomas Pointz. To his everlasting honour, he took immediate steps for the release of the beloved Father. The British merchants rose to a man to assist him: for Tyndale had the power of winning all hearts—so much so, that it is said those who had vowed his destruction had to cast about for a villain who, like Henry Phillips, was not likely to be softened by William Tyndale’s words. Sir Stephen Vaughan

and others, like Balaam of old, had been sent out to curse, and had been constrained to bless instead.

Master Pointz succeeded at first. By earnest representations made to Cromwell, it was hoped William Tyndale's imprisonment would be short. From Brussels to London went Thomas Pointz, and Phillips, fearing after all he should be outwitted by Pointz's honesty and courage, managed to get him arrested and thrown into prison. Here he was in danger of his life, and escaped in the night with great difficulty.

His brother, an influential and wealthy merchant in London, was entreated to try to make the most of what was reported to be the case, that the King in one of his variable moods was now in favour of Tyndale—"And," said Thomas Pointz, "I know that the King has never a truer-hearted subject living. Let the King's grace esteem him a greater treasure than any man he hath in his realm."

When Pointz returned to his house after his imprisonment, he found his wife and Karina Gilford anxiously awaiting him.

All that money and zeal could do was done by those who loved William Tyndale in Antwerp, but the prisoner in the Castle of Vilvorde remained in close confinement. Not idle or hopeless, for he prepared there the edition of his New Testament which imitated Luther's plan, who issued the Gospels in the different dialects of Germany.

William Tyndale printed this version in what we might call provincial orthography, thereby bringing it near to the understanding of the lower classes of England, especially of the agricultural labourers in his native county of Gloucestershire, thereby fulfilling that old promise that "the ploughboy should sing as he followed

the oxen on the Cotswold Hills the songs of Zion in his own language."

There appeared before the Castle of Vilvorde one December day two women who begged to speak with the gaoler or lieutenant of the castle, Adolphe van Wesell. They were shown into his private room, where his wife and daughter were at work with their distaffs.

"I have come to seek an audience with the noble governor," the taller of the two women said, throwing back her long black veil and disclosing the face of Karina Gilford. "I have come many miles with my friend and guide to pray to be permitted to see one who is a prisoner in this castle—William Tyndale."

"Ah! good and holy man," was the answer. "He is one for whom we cherish kindly feelings. My children and I alike love him."

This answer was so widely different to what Karina expected, that she clasped the good Frau van Wesell's hands in hers, exclaiming,—

"And you will let me see him? My friend and I have walked weary miles for this end. I pray you refuse not my request."

"I can do nought without my husband's leave, and I must obtain it. Take now rest and refreshing, and abide here to-night," was the reply. "I can give you bed and board in our own apartments."

The kindly reception was indeed cheering. Karina Gilford, unable to bear the suspense and misery of her position at Antwerp, and unwilling to do anything which could implicate the good Pointzes, who were still in great uncertainty as to what mischief might not be brewing against them, had determined to set off to Vilvorde and

try to see for herself the condition of her early and dearest friend.

Elfrida Bragge was left behind with Mistress Pointz and little Giulia: and a strong and stout burgher's wife, who knew the road to Vilvorde well, Brussels being her native place, had agreed to guide Karina thither, and assist her in the accomplishment of her purpose.

William Tyndale's conduct while at Vilvorde was so patient, gentle, and winning, that he had been allowed all the alleviations which lay in the power of those who had the care of him to give him. Indeed, the lieutenant, or sub-governor, and his family often resorted to the prison cell, where the light of this pure life was shining brightly, and shedding its lustre on all who came under its influence.

The lieutenant took upon himself to allow Karina Gilford to see William Tyndale. It was with a beating heart and a strained expectation which was positive pain, that she followed Adolphe van Wesell down the long, dark corridor to the gloomy cell where her old friend and tutor was confined. When she saw him she flung herself at his feet, covering her face with her hands. He raised her gently, and said:—

“What is it, dear daughter? Thou dost not weep because thou hast found me here, I trow! Nay, compose thyself, for I have much to learn and much to say. It was not thus with thee in old days,” he continued, as Karina sobbed with uncontrollable emotion. “She is weary and worn,” he said, addressing Adolphe van Wesell; “she will recover soon. I was her tutor and guide in her youth,” he added, “and she hath seen many sorrows since. Nay, nay, Karina,” he continued, “thou art come hither to cheer me, and not to grieve me.”

“I am so weak, dear Father. I only long to lay

down my head in the dust, were it not for my Giulia—my child.”

“Aye, it is ever so. Earth has ties which bind us. I have said oftentimes I would die gladly, but even now, Karina, I love life. I would fain be watching the shadows chase each other along the swelling Cotswolds on this winter day. Methinks I know how the sunshine is glittering on the Severn’s mouth, and how the sheep are nibbling the short grass on the sheltered side of Stinchcombe Hill. These pictures come before me, and I crave to be free, not shut in by dungeon walls, not cramped for room and air and blessed light. And yet, Karina, I love life—it is my Lord’s gift to me. I will lay it down at His feet, and so it pleaseth Him; but I would fain keep it yet a few years, and see the work He has given me to do prospering.”

He had talked on, anxious to give her time to rally herself. The lieutenant saw his object, and kindly and courteously brought in a deep oak chair from his own room that Karina might rest in it. Then he withdrew, saying he would return in an hour and conduct Karina to his wife’s quarters.

The turning of the heavy key in the lock, and the grating of the bolt, told of imprisonment, and Karina shuddered.

“Locked in—ever locked in!” she said.

“Yes, like a criminal, but it matters not. Hast thou had new troubles? Tell me first of thyself, before I ask about those who are dear to me at Antwerp.”

“I have ever a life-trouble, dear Father: though at times—as when he brought me here, and when our boy died—my husband seems to turn towards me with the old affection. He hath no steadfastness. I heard from one who had been at Court, that he is fast wearing him-

self out with dissipation and lawlessness, and that he has lost favour with the King. My children's father, the love and husband of my youth, still claims my duty; but, alas! I cannot tell how to aid him, nor does he look to me for aid," she said, her dark eyes glowing. "That is all of myself: and now what of thee, dear Father?"

"I am in good hands with the sub-governor, as you see. He does all that in him lies, but he is powerless to do what he would. I am, as thou seest, threadbare," he said with a smile, "and I get so much catarrh and running from the eyes for need of my warm cap. This very day I have penned a letter to the Governor-in-chief, Antoine de Berghes, Marquis of Berg op Zoon, praying for certain articles which have been detained by the Procureur. I have writ it in Latin. Thou hast not forgot thy Latin, Karina, and thy Greek? That is well!—smile on thy old tutor, and bring back the memory of that fair morning when we stood at either end of a narrow plank, and thou didst warn me one or other must be in the stream if we met in the middle. Thou hadst a basket of daffodils on thy head, borne as easily as a queen weareth a crown. I mind that day, for as I knelt in church at the low mass, I heard the voice of my Lord saying to me, 'Arise and depart, for this is not thy rest.'"

"Ah! Father! Father!—and now thou art here! Master Pointz has done his best to obtain thy release, and he still hopes."

"Doth he know that thou art come hither?"

"He was absent: for since he came out of prison he has ailed much, and Mistress Pointz urged him to depart again to a kinsman at Ghent for a short space. I came hither because, forsooth, I could not rest. I left my child with Elfrida, and a good and worthy woman has guided me hither—part walking, part on a strange pillion, when

she and I rode behind some skins which were dressed at Antwerp for doublets in war. They smelt so ill we were glad to use our feet again."

"And thou wilt not go to England again?"

"I would go did my husband bid me: but, Father Tyndale, he needs me not—he needs me not. Others are before me. As with king, so with his subjects. An evil example is soon followed. Ah! dear Father, my heart must be hard, or it would have broken long years ago."

William Tyndale was greatly moved—he fell on his knees and poured out a petition, as from the depths of his noble, sympathetic heart, for the deeply-tried woman who knelt by his side.

"Comfort the soul of Thy servant," he said, "O Lord, and heal the wound of her woman's heart. Keep her near to Thy cross in life and in death, and keep her and her child in the faith for which I am ready to be offered—a faith which is bound not by earthly potentates like fetters of iron on the soul, but the faith which springeth of the discernment of Thy love, and bringeth forth the fruit of peace."

When the prayer was over there was silence, and Karina, lifting her head, saw the face of her tutor lighted with no earthly radiance, and whispered low to herself,—*"It is as the face of an angel!"*

Then he spoke to her many words of wise caution: bidding her return to Thomas Pointz's house till some way was shown her, and to be ready if her husband came to fetch her away.

"He spoke in the last letter I had from him, brought to me by one of the merchants, that he would wish to have Giulia. Ah! dear Father, say not I am to give up my lamb into the jaws of the lion. Say not this is my duty."

"Methinks God will not require such a sacrifice at

thy hands; but bow meekly to His will, Karina, and He will provide Himself the lamb for the offering of thy true heart. Now wilt hear my letter?" he added brightly. "See, I will read it in the English, and do thou follow the Latin. There is scant light here, and when day wanes it is wearyful sitting alone in the darkness: save that now and again the daughter and little son of my gaoler visit me, and sing me sweet songs in their own tongue which tell of the land of Luther. Ah, me! methinks Master Luther has been dealt with more kindly than me. But away with such thoughts. Now, Mistress Gilford, for thy Latin task—a pity we have not the sharp-witted Giles Walsh to help thee out! Poor Giles! Now attend." And William Tyndale read from one sheet the English version of the Latin letter, while Karina read in the other.

"I believe, right worshipful, that you are not ignorant of what has been determined concerning me by the Council of Brabant. Therefore I entreat your lordship, and that by the Lord Jesus, that if I am to remain here (in the Castle of Vilvorde) during the winter, you will request the Procureur to be good enow to send me from my goods, which he hath in his possession, a warmer cap, for I suffer exceedingly from cold in the head, being afflicted sorely with a perpetual catarrh, which is considerably increased in the cell. A warmer coat also, for that which I have is very thin; also a piece of cloth to patch my leggings. My overcoat has been worn out—my shirts are also worn out. He (the Procureur) has a woollen shirt of mine, if he will be kind enough to send it. I have also with him leggings of thicker cloth for putting on above. He has also warmer caps for wearing at night. I wish also his permission to have a candle in the evening, for it is wearisome to sit alone in the dark.

But, above all, I entreat and beseech your clemency to be urgent with the Procureur that he may kindly permit me to have my Hebrew Bible, Hebrew grammar, and Hebrew dictionary, that I may spend my time with that study. And in return may you obtain your dearest wish, provided always it be consistent with the salvation of your soul. But if any other resolution has been come to concerning me before the conclusion of the winter, I shall be patient, abiding the will of God, to the glory of the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, whose Spirit I pray may ever direct your heart. Amen.

“W. TYNDALE.” *

“Nay,” Tyndale said, “thou wert not wont to weep at our lessons of old. Dost thou find the Latin so hard?”

“It is that it pierces my heart that thou shouldst need these common things of life when thy persecutors have enough and to spare. I will away back whence I came, and I promise you there shall be all thou needst at thy command ere many days have passed. Warmth, light, clothes!—nay, it is too hard. Can He whose work thou hast done permit thee to suffer thus? It is a dark mystery.”

“Say not so, Karina, beloved daughter in Christ. Think on one who lay fast bound in prison; who, from lips that were even then hard by speaking gracious words, craved for one of remembrance, and none came! Think of him, his near Friend and Companion in the flowery

* This letter has been found in the archives of the Council of Brabant by the learned and indefatigable M. Galestat. The original document has been photographed, and is in the possession of Mr. Francis Fry, of Bristol. Antoine de Berghes, Marquis of Berg op Zoon, was appointed governor in 1530. Adolphe Van Wesell was lieutenant of the Castle of Vilvorde.

path of childhood, turning as it seemed away, while he lingered in a dungeon! Even when the feet of his enemies tramped along the corridors to shed his blood to gratify a wicked woman's whim, he might say, methinks, 'At last He cometh to set John free—at last!' He came, but not as John willed or hoped; nevertheless, with a crown of martyrdom in His hand, and a word infinitely sweet, '*Before Me to death, whither I follow thee!*' The like may be reserved for me, and thither would *I* follow Him—unworthy, but not doubtful; reluctant, it may be, for the flesh is weak; but *sure* that He will be with me, always, to the end."

The time soon came for farewell. The lieutenant kindly despatched Karina on her way with her faithful friend. She was entering the streets of Antwerp, her heart full of resolves to be patient, when two of the Procureur's emissaries stopped the horse driven by an officer of Vilvorde. He produced a paper, and on it was written that one named Karina Gilford, wife of Hubert Gilford, late Sub-Comptroller of His Highness the King of England's household, was arrested to await his Majesty's pleasure in the prison named St. Jacques, being convicted of carrying in her bosom written portions of the Gospels, and of harbouring amongst her goods tracts writ by one William Tyndale, which were pestilent, heretical, and damnable, and endangered the well-being of his Majesty's well-beloved subjects.

"I pray you," said Karina, "let me see my child—let me embrace her once more."

But her request was as if made to deaf ears. In another hour's time Karina Gilford was a prisoner in Antwerp gaol, as William Tyndale was in the Castle of Vilvorde.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1536.

THE story of this year is a sad one. It seems to be marked by breaking hearts, and the triumph of unrighteous dealing in those in high places. In January Katharine of Arragon ended her sad life at Kimbolton Castle, scarcely more than five months before Anne Boleyn, her once triumphant successor, perished on the scaffold. Sir Thomas More had fallen in the previous year a victim to the King's caprice. The same hand that dragged him from his happy private life at Chelsea, and raised him to the highest office in the State, had thrown him down from the exalted position without a scruple when he dared to protest against an unrighteous decree. It is hard to realize a state of things like this—hard to believe that the English people could still be loyal and devoted to the name of a king who could ring the peals of his marriage bells four-and-twenty hours after the cruel axe had descended on the neck of one whom a few short years before he had loaded with gifts and love-tokens. The whole temper of the times must be taken as a baleful atmosphere wherein the worst and most vindictive passions of subjects, as well as those in high places, grew and flourished. Loathing and horror would, we should think, mark a nation's sense of the evil deeds perpetrated by Henry VIII.; but it does not seem to have been so. There was in him some dangerous gift of fascination which seems to have been irresistible. He could weep over the last letter of his broken-hearted Queen addressed to him from Kimbolton; and he could express kindly feelings towards William Tyndale one day, to be replaced by bitter animosity on the next.

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Thomas Pointz wrote to his brother in London a touching tribute to Tyndale's worth, and began it by saying:—

"It was said that the King had written in favour of William Tyndale, now in prison and like to suffer death, and it is feared these letters have been intercepted. This man lodged with me three-quarters of a year. I know that the King has never a truer-hearted subject this day living. Brother," he continues, "the knowledge I have of this man causes me to write as my conscience bids me."

But all efforts were vain. Two English enemies at Louvain took great pains to translate from the English into Latin those things which would tell most against him, so that the clergy might understand them and condemn him. The days lengthened out, and the spring once more reigned supreme, giving place to a radiant summer, and there was no change for the better in the condition of the prisoner of Vilvorde.

Master Pointz worked hard also for Karina Gilford's release, and in May news was brought of Hubert Gilford's death. He pleaded in high quarters for mercy for his widow, who was separated from their only child and imprisoned on so slight a charge that all men marvelled—yet for some time it was in vain. "Mistress Gilford," it was said, "had carried in her breast a manuscript written in the heretic's own hand; her husband, a good son of the Church and faithful servant of the same, had twice warned her. Once had he most righteously consigned her Book to the flames at St. Paul's Cross! Then patiently abiding he had hoped to recover her to the fold of the Church: but she had contumaciously resisted, had obtained for herself and her maid more Books, and when the house was searched and the Books seized she showed no sign of contrition. Out of love to her, and

anxious desire for her safety, Hubert Gilford had fled with her and their child and maid to Antwerp, conjuring her to amend her ways. Instead thereof, she had conspired to spread the evil, of which William Tyndale was the source, in a poisonous stream amidst his Majesty's subjects in Antwerp: and contrary to all orders she had obtained entrance at the Castle and permission to see the prisoner—no doubt for the unfolding of some base scheme for the promulgating of the last heretical edition of the Holy Scriptures. Karina had proved an ill-conditioned wife to a good Catholic husband, and she must take the due reward of her deeds." This was indeed a new light on the picture of poor Karina's wedded life. She was accounted the sinner and not the sinned against, and all sympathy was given to the man who died in his prime—the best years of his life wasted, untrue in all relations as husband and father, but dying in full communion with the Church, and leaving goodly sums for masses to various religious houses for the repose of his sin-sick soul.

Alas! are there not many unsteadfast natures like Hubert Gilford's, with many gifts of mind and person, with spasmodic bursts of desire after better things, and apparent effort to begin a new life, but making sad shipwreck at last, because they are tossed on the stormy sea of life's temptations and trials without a pilot and without a helm. There could be no outward circumstances less likely to strengthen what was good than those which surrounded Hubert Gilford in the Court of Henry VIII.; but there is One who is sufficient for the weakest, and if we call on Him for aid He hears and answers.

It was early in September when preparations were made for the formality of a trial, and William Tyndale was summoned to appear. Thomas Pointz found means

to let friends in England know the condition of Karina, and Simon Bragge was again made the medium of communication between Bristol and Chipping Sodbury Manor. Age had told more on the sacristan of St. Mary Redclyffe than on his aunt, Tebita Collet, and he was obliged to consign the letter brought to him by an Antwerp merchant, marked "Haste! haste! post haste!" to a young apprentice to deliver.

Thirteen years had silvered Sir John Walsh's hair, and bent his once erect figure; but except for deepened lines about the eyes and mouth, Dame Marjory still remained marvellously youthful.

When the letter was delivered at the Manor, it caused some excitement. Sir John pondered over it for some time in silence, then handing it to his wife, he said:—"I must e'en ride to Inclyff forthwith, to take counsel with John Huchyns;" and, booted and spurred, the good knight rode off in less than half an hour after the receipt of the intelligence, with a heavy heart which could find no relief in words.

He left all the exclamations and expressions of wonder and grief to Dame Marjory and her women. There was yet another silent but sad member of the household. Five minutes after Sir John had left the Manor, the short, quick trot of a horse behind him made him turn his head.

"This is ill news," said poor Giles. "I am fain to ride to Inclyff with you, by your leave."

"So do, so do, boy!" for Giles, though now a man of nearly thirty, was a boy in his father's eyes. "Would to God our riding to the world's end could save her or William Tyndale, and we'd do it if we died in the saddle."

"Aye, would we," said poor Giles in his deep bass

guttural. "Aye, would we. I for one would die this minute to save *her*."

The formal trial was over, the decree had gone forth—William Tyndale was sentenced to death: condemned by virtue of a decree made at Augsburg against what was called heresy.

Calm and dignified to the last, he was led out to die, beneath the overarching autumn sky, in which the sun had lately risen over the fair meadow lands which sloped away from the Castle of Vilvorde to the shining river. Dewdrops hung like diamonds on each tiny blade of grass, the larks carolled their matin song, and the earth lay serene under the smile of Infinite Love.

Strange indeed was the contrast, sharp and strange, between the ominous pile of rough faggots, the stake with its clanging chain, the executioner with the halter, the soldiers with their halberds, the great concourse of priests and people gathered together to see William Tyndale die! To die, to satisfy the ignorant clamours of those who knew not what they did! To die, because he had devoted the acquirements of the scholar to the noblest of all aims—because he had raised on high the beacon-light of God's inspired Word in the country which gave him birth. Great in his work and in his life, he was even greater in his death. He surveyed all the preparations with a sedate and majestic calm. His own words, addressed to one who had gone before him through the fire, were to be verified by himself.

"Give yourself, cast yourself, yield yourself, commit yourself, wholly and only to your loving Father; then shall His power be in you, and make you strong, and that so strong that you shall feel no pain, which shall be to another present death, and His Spirit shall speak in

you, and teach you what to answer according to His promise."

We hear of no great declaration of faith at the last—his life had borne witness to his faith. We hear of no passionate protest against the errors of those who were his murderers—that protest was entered wheresoever the Gospel of God's grace was read by the people he loved. We hear of no sad farewells, as if the parting from those he had cared for, and whose affection he had won, were final. The old keen satire, the profound logic, the sparkling wit, the overwhelming tide of eloquence, the triumph of his literary and intellectual gifts, were all hushed to rest now. With the gentleness of a woman, with the firm courage of a hero, he contented himself to die!

The details of his martyrdom are too well known to need repetition. Long before his body was consumed, his soul had entered into the Lord's eternal peace.

"Open the King's eyes, Lord, that he may see!" was the last utterance from those lips, on which so many hungry souls had hung for the Bread of Life. Let us echo the martyr's words, and pray that we may see how blessed and beautiful a thing it is to study the Gospel of God's dear Son in our own homes, and to hear it in the Church we love. Let us pray that we may see the love and the tenderness and forbearance of which it tells, set forth in our own lives; and hold fast to the well-known motto of one who was versed in all the wisdom of the schools, and who has left on record the story of his struggles and his victory:—

"In necessariis, unitas;
In dubiis, libertas;
In omnibus, charitas."

That night saw the escape of Thomas Pointz from

Antwerp with one whom he had rescued from prison. In the excitement which prevailed at Brussels, and the great concourse of people who had flocked to Vilvorde, Thomas Pointz had managed to effect Karina Gilford's escape. He had already put his wife and Elfrida Bragge and the little Giulia on board a ship which was bound for Gravesend. The captain knew him well, and had many a time shipped cargoes for him and for the merchants who frequented his house. He had money enough for all needs, and he had, as we know, a heart ready to sympathise and a hand ready to help. It was with great difficulty he had roused poor Karina to make the necessary exertion. Solitude and confinement, separation from her child, and desolation of heart, had so changed her, that all power of response to her deliverer's efforts seemed to have died out.

"I shall never get her aboard ship," he thought, as he half-carried, half-supported her, in the darkness, through the deserted street.

Presently the sound of an Englishman's voice broke the silence:—

"Canst tell me, good sir, where I shall find the house of one Master Thomas Pointz? I have been in Antwerp ere now, but I cannot find the way from the quay."

"Master Huchyns!" said Pointz. "Verily, God hath sent you in my need. Help me to carry this poor creature to the quay, where a ship lies waiting. The tide will turn at midnight, and who can say what bloodhounds may be upon our heels."

"Who is it? Yes, I will help. I am only but now landed from England. I seek one Mistress Karina Gilford."

"Then take her up quick, for it is she," was the answer.

In a moment the half-insensible form was raised in

the strong arms that had for so many years longed to possess her and to serve her.

"I had your letter, and I started at once," he said; "but no more now," and they made their way quickly to the quay.

Two of Thomas Pointz's servants were looking for them, each bearing a horn lantern.

"There is not a moment to spare, Master Pointz; the tide is on the turn, and we shall have to lay to till the morning."

With all speed John Huchyns bore his burden across the narrow plank. Pointz followed, the cables were loosed, and the good ship moved slowly down the dark silent river with its precious cargo.

In the flickering light of the torches which the sailors bore as they led the way to the cabin, John Huchyns saw the face he loved, as Karina's head hung across his arm. That pale, haggard face, with the long hair streaming down streaked with silver on which the light shone, those thin parted lips, once so red, through which the ivory teeth gleamed—oh, could this be Karina? Yes; sorrow and privation had done their work, and in this prematurely aged woman John Huchyns could but dimly discern the image of his lost love.

When the day dawned, and the bright morning sun glanced upon the waves, as the ship went curtsying over them homeward bound, John Huchyns, sitting by the heap of cloths and cushions where Karina Gilford lay, noticed that her eyes were fixed on him. Questioning and wistful was the gaze.

"My child!" she whispered.

"She is safe asleep in the cabin beyond."

"My husband! my husband!"

"He is dead!" was the reluctant answer.

"Amyas told me—in the prison," she said dreamily. "I saw my boy there most nights." Then putting up her thin hand she said,—

"The dear Father—William Tyndale?"

Thomas Pointz, who was stretched full length on some sacks, near the ladder leading to the deck, turned and gave John Huchyns a warning look.

"The dear Father—is—at rest," she said. "I know it—I know—and I—I want rest. Master Huchyns, where am I?"

"In a ship homeward bound. Please God, Mistress Gilford, you shall soon be safe at the old Manor. Sir John bid me come to fetch you thither."

"Giulia! Giulia!" was all she said. "The child! my child!"

Thomas Pointz rose, and stepping into the next small cabin, brought from it Giulia in his arms. Stooping, he laid the daughter by the mother's side, and instantly the floodgates of her tears were loosened; with a great sobbing sigh she said,—

"Dear Lord, I thank Thee! I can rest now! Ah! my sweet one—little Giulia!"

The child, aroused, raised herself on her elbow, and gazed on the face so near her own.

"Mother! come back at last," she said sleepily. "Sweet mother! Don't weep, mother."

But those who looked on this scene with dim eyes knew that the tears were the blessed relief sent from God, and turning aside they, with one accord, climbed the stairs to the deck, and left mother and child together.

Once more the May sunshine lies on the Gloucestershire hills—once more the glory of the new-born spring

is filling all things living with rejoicing. There had been many alternations of hope and fear as to the intention of those in high places. Alas! there were many more to come before the Reformation, built up by the circulation of the Word of God, should be steadfastly established. The foundation had been laid, but there were to be many trials and apparent overthrows before the building stood. Nearly five years had passed since William Tyndale had entered into his rest, and many who had known him had passed away.

On a settle near the deep bay window of Inclyff Karina lay, watching the newly-returned swallows darting in and out from the caves, their gentle twittering expressing the joy of being in their old quarters again.

A tall girl, whose rich dark hair was bound back by a crimson snood, stood by the door which opened on the terrace. It was as if the Karina of days long past had come back. She held in her hand a bunch of early roses, and she sang gently a low sweet song.

"He is coming, mother," she said, "at last—he is coming."

And John Huchyns' tall, stalwart form was seen coming up from the meadow path with long strides.

Karina's eyes brightened.

"Is he alone?" she asked.

"Yes, I will run to meet him."

She went swiftly down the slope, and a sharp voice called from an upper window:—

"Gudy! Gudy! thy feet are ill shod for long grass, which the rain of last night has soaked, Gudy!"

It was Katherine Huchyns's English for Giulia. She hated foreign names—fandangle names, she called them.

But Giulia heeded not: she ran on, and soon had linked her arm within John Huchyns's.

"How does thy mother fare?" It was ever his first question.

"Oh, she hath got through the day pretty well. She was very weak in the morning, and Mistress Katherine would make her swallow that nauseous draught. It is so loathsome—prythee, tell her so, for mother is so good she will do all she is told."

"Unlike thee, methinks," said John Huchyns fondly.

"Ah, but mother was not always as now," said Giulia. "Even Elfrida minds the time when she could be angry, and her eyes flash like fire."

"Thy mother is as an angel now," said John Huchyns sadly. "Methinks, Giulia, she is very near the land of the angels."

"Oh! no, no!—she is stronger than last month," the girl said resolutely, with the desire we all feel to blind our eyes to the fact that what we love is leaving us. "Come in and see her."

A bright flush of joy spread itself over Karina's face as John Huchyns went up to her couch and, stooping, kissed her.

"I shall be walking to meet thee soon," she said. "I am better, dear John."

"That is good hearing—so the child is right."

"Hast thou been to Stroud?" she asked, "and is there any news?"

"Great news," was the reply. "I have brought thee a copy of the proclamation I borrowed from Sir Richard Lee's tutor. It will give thee joy, Karina."

And John Huchyns drew from his pouch a copy of the proclamation of 1541, which set forth in reference to the reading of the Bible that many English towns had neglected their duty, and had not provided copies: in consequence of which the command to furnish them was

repeated, and the curate and inhabitants remaining disobedient were threatened with a penalty of forty shillings for every month during which the Book should be wanting. The proclamation fixed the price of the Great Bible at a sum not exceeding ten shillings unbound, and twelve shillings well and sufficiently bound, trimmed, and clasped.

"There," he said, "beloved; thou wilt not have to spend the twelve shillings, for thou art well supplied; but I have ordered a large copy with clasps for the church, and I will be more diligent than before in gathering the people for the reading thereof."

"What good news!" Karina said, putting her hand into her husband's. "Doth he know, I marvel—doth he know, our dear Father William Tyndale, that his work is living and growing even as a fair plant which the Lord has watered?"

"We cannot tell, my beloved; but there is for him, we may be sure, the exceeding great reward of the faithful."

They sat long in the deepening twilight, speaking of many things, but often silent. Giulia's voice, singing, came in at times through the open door: then Mistress Katherine's, as of old, sharp and incisive; then the sound of both grew faint as they went round the house to look at some new treasures in the poultry-yard.

"My beloved," John Huchyns said presently, "thou art not worse to-night?"

"Nay, I am better, and so happy," was the answer.

"Thou hast never repented the day, now four years ago, that I brought thee from the Manor to a home with me?"

"Ah! how canst thou ask me such a question? Thou hast been my sweetest rest. A poor, worn-out,

sorrowful woman came to thee, and thou didst so compass her with thy faithful love, that she only fears to love this earth too much—for—”

“For what?” he asked quickly.

She would not finish the sentence, but lifted her face to his for a kiss.

“Eventide light is sweet,” she said, “and for us the Dayspring will arise in God’s own time. The Eternal Dayspring,” she whispered, “where we shall all see and know. My boy, William Tyndale, and all, will be gathered there, for whom the Lord died—the Eternal Dayspring,” she repeated.

“Not yet! not yet!” was the cry of John Huchyns’s earth-bound heart, “not yet!” But he spake no word. He gathered his wife closer to his side, and a thrush sent forth a flood of song from the lime-tree by the house. And Giulia’s sweet young voice was heard singing as she drew near the window:

“Be the day weary, or be the day long,
At length it ringeth for evensong.”

And again Karina said gently, “Yes,—and then the

ETERNAL DAYSPRING!”

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